Special Christmas Book Issue
Reviews by • Jonathan Alter • James Fallows • Robert M. Kaus • Phillip Keisling

The Washington Monthly

DECEMBER 1983/$2

The rescue mission we botched

Why the jobs bill isn't working

Paul Fussell's superiority complex

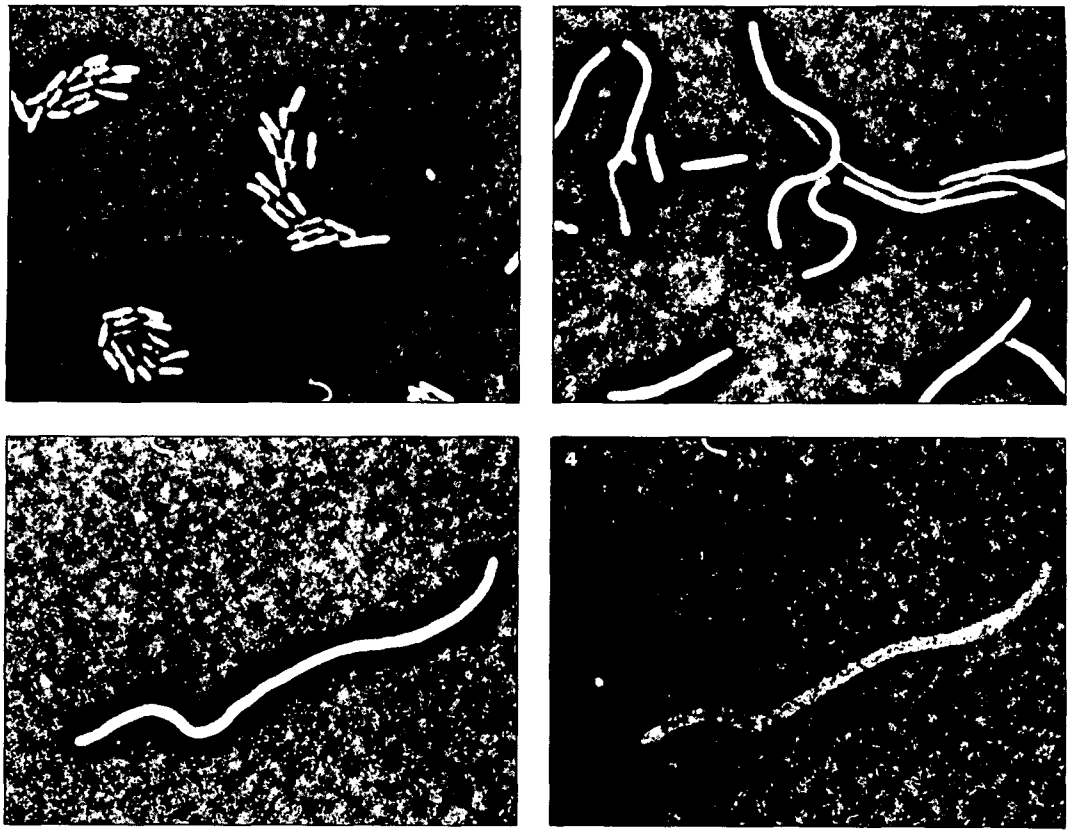
Shakedown in the boardroom

JFK's Rx for growth without inflation

0 74470 65748 09

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We've declared total war...



Bacteria in lab dish (1) elongate after addition of piperacillin, a new antibiotic (2); the cell wall of the microorganism weakens (3), then ruptures and dies (4).

...on infectious diseases.

Infectious diseases are the enemy—ranking fifth among the leading causes of death in the United States. More than two million people require hospital treatment each year for a wide variety of infections, adding an extra $1.5 billion in hospitalization costs alone to our country's already staggering health-care bill.

Not only do these disease-causing invaders strike swiftly and severely when the body's defenses are weak, but over the years new strains of many bacteria have appeared—strains that are resistant to many existing medications.

Fortunately, research scientists have developed a new generation of antibiotics, including a semi-synthetic penicillin (whose bacterial action is pictured above), to battle against a broad spectrum of life-threatening microorganisms. These rapid-acting antibiotics provide physicians with powerful new weapons for their medical arsenals.

But the war against infectious diseases continues and our search for even newer, more effective medications goes on.

Lederle

For more information about Lederle's antibiotics research and general background material, call or write: Public Affairs Department, Lederle Laboratories, Wayne New Jersey 07470, 201/831-4684.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RECALLS: WHY THEY OCCUR. HOW TO ANSWER ONE ON YOUR CAR.

When General Motors orders a recall, we believe we are providing an important service to our customers and showing again how GM stands behind its products.

Every car we manufacture has 14,000 or so parts which must be interchangeable. Although the reliability of parts in GM cars rivals that of the parts we supply for lunar rockets or for commercial jets, problems sometimes occur and probably always will.

You can't repeal the law of probability. Somewhere a machine tool may wear unexpectedly fast, or a material may have an invisible contamination.

General Motors tests its vehicles for millions of the dirtiest, dustiest, roughest, coldest, hottest miles imaginable. We even put our newly developed vehicles and parts into thousands of taxis and other fleets in dozens of locations all over North America. The goal: to put on real-life mileage fast. But even this is not the same as billions of miles driven by customers through every possible road, climate and maintenance condition.

Then the law of probability comes into play, especially since we produce millions more vehicles for North America than any other manufacturer. Although all car and truck manufacturers—both foreign and domestic—have recalls, we're a little more noticeable because of our numbers.

If you receive a recall notice on your car, you may feel like taking a gamble and ignoring it. Please don't. Answer it promptly. Follow the instructions in the letter. Recalls are initiated to protect your safety or to keep your car in good running order.

We publicize recalls so car owners will be aware of them. By federal regulation, General Motors has to notify owners by letter and report to the government on the progress of a recall for 18 months. **We go beyond the federal requirements. GM dealers send follow-up letters to owners if no response is received the first time.** In addition, GM dealers can use our CRIS (Computerized Recall Identification System) to tell you instantly of any recall work necessary on a vehicle recalled during the last 7 years. This is important to know when buying a used car. Ask any GM dealer for this information.

If you hear on television or radio of a recall which you think applies to your car, please follow these steps for your convenience.

- First, wait until you receive a letter from us saying your car has been recalled. It may take some time before mailing lists can be compiled and parts can be distributed to the dealers.
- Then call your dealer and give him the recall campaign number supplied in the letter. He will arrange an appointment to have the repairs made. This could save you time and could help the dealer to schedule his busy service department.

If you have read or heard in the media about a recall campaign, but don't receive a letter within a month, ask your dealer to check the dealer bulletin or CRIS to see if your vehicle is affected. Give the dealer your vehicle identification number, which you'll find on your car's title, registration or warranty folder. It can also be found on the instrument panel just inside the windshield on the driver's side.

There are cases in which the auto manufacturers and the government differ over the seriousness of a problem. And these instances sometimes receive a great deal of publicity. But such situations are the exception.

Almost all of our recalls are voluntarily started by General Motors before the government is involved.

If your car needs to be recalled for any reason, please don't ignore the notice. Taking care of those problems in your car is good for you and good for us.

This advertisement is part of our continuing effort to give customers useful information about their cars and trucks and the company that builds them.

GM
MARK OF EXCELLENCE

Chevrolet • Pontiac
Oldsmobile • Buick
Cadillac • GMC Truck

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

Voluntary Responses

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend's article ("The Forgotten Virtue of Voluntarism," October) struck a responsive chord. As confirmed volunteers, we in the League of Women Voters know firsthand the important personal and community benefits that come from volunteer involvement.

Townsend is right to sound the alarm that the spirit of voluntarism has fallen on hard times. In my judgment, a resurgence of voluntarism is unlikely to come about unless voluntary organizations adapt to change. I am astounded at the number of voluntary organizations that lament the passing of voluntarism without examining their own practices and procedures that make it almost impossible for the employed woman to participate—and I say "woman" deliberately, since women have historically made up the largest population of the voluntary sector. The return of many women to the workforce has had a profound impact on this traditional core of the volunteer movement.

Yet the common assumption continues to be that a woman will cease to be a volunteer once she takes on paid employment. I speak from personal experience: when I returned to full-time employment several years ago a great many people assumed I would at the same time withdraw from volunteer activity.

The League is one of the voluntary organizations seeking to adapt. To help us understand and adjust to the economic, political, and demographic trends that have changed the nature of voluntarism in America, we looked at data from "Americans Volunteer," a 1981 Gallup study. This study found that 52 percent of American adults and 53 percent of teenagers had volunteered during the previous year. However, less than one-third of those who volunteered spent as much as two hours a week in voluntary activities. Another striking aspect of the Gallup study, of particular concern to organizations such as ours, is the very small percentage of voluntary activity devoted to citizenship and political work.

I am convinced that organizers of volunteer services must recognize that they cannot turn people away who are unable or unwilling to devote their lives to "the cause." We simply must make accommodations to changes in volunteers' time schedules as well as their lifestyles if voluntarism is to thrive.

DOROTHY S. RIDINGS
Washington, D.C.

Dorothy Ridings is president of the League of Women Voters.

Why don't you try to get some balance in the articles you print in your magazine? The article by Kathleen Kennedy Townsend is an illustration of the gyrations some people go through to avoid change and keep the system as it is. Townsend and her kind of people will do anything for the poor except change the conditions that caused the poverty in the first place. Try to do that and the rich will close ranks immediately. They have demonstrated *that*—the Shrivers, Kennedys, etc.—and have said so.

G. VAN MATRE
Washington, D.C.

Congratulations to you and Kathleen Kennedy Townsend for "The Forgotten Virtue of Voluntarism." It's about time someone reminded us that we do have the power to make things better for someone other than ourselves.

I was particularly impressed by Jeffrey Toobin's sidebar, "Why I Walk the Beat," because I'm an auxiliary sergeant here in New York. Toobin more than adequately described the pride we feel in our effort to curb crime and help our fellow citizens, despite hours of boredom and moments of terror.

Just to add to the information he has already imparted, I thought you might like to know that, on the average, the 8,000 auxiliary officers in New York volunteer 100,000 hours monthly and that many have received official commendations from the police department.

In my precinct, the 70th (which takes in the Flatbush and Midwood sections of Brooklyn), we share something with Manhattan residents—a park designed

Can the outcome of the next presidential election be accurately forecasted?

Forecasting Presidential Elections

Steven J. Rosenstone

In a fascinating and timely book, Rosenstone formulates a theory that has proven successful in predicting which states each party will carry and who will capture the largest number of popular and electoral votes. An invaluable work for anyone wishing to participate intelligently in election analysis. $20.00

At your bookstore, or from
Yale University Press
New Haven, CT 06520

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by Frederick Law Olmstead. Our park is called Prospect, and while it is smaller than Central Park its reputation for crime was just as large—until three years ago. In the summer of 1981 Prospect Park was "invaded" by 350 auxiliary officers, and in a three-month period our usefulness was proved. In comparison to crime statistics recorded in the summer of 1980, overall crime dropped better than 40 percent; the robbery rate went down 61 percent; and there was but one rape all that summer.

If anyone asks what the ordinary citizen can do about crime, tell him what we have done in Brooklyn.

DONALD ALLEN GROSS
Brooklyn, New York

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend's well-written article on voluntarism accurately sets forth the need in our society for volunteers, but in the process she implies that government funding for a variety of basic needs is somehow an inappropriate solution.

Four million volunteers *are needed* to teach illiterate adults; however if only 1 percent of that number (40,000) were involved in lobbying local, state, and federal governments for substantial new funding, the benefits to illiterate adults would far exceed the gains achieved by those 40,000 volunteer adults tutoring illiterate students.

Governor Hunt is right when he says "money is no substitute for getting involved with your hands and your heart," but it is clear to those of us involved with both volunteer and classroom-based programs in the field of adult literacy that the active involvement of volunteers is still no substitute for money.

ART ELLISON
Concord, New Hampshire

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend made an excellent point when she wrote that conservatives in or out of the Reagan administration should not be permitted by liberals to monopolize this worthy cause.

Volunteerism (to spell the word another way) and philanthropy have long been an integral part of America's democratic traditions. No less a liberal than John Gardner, retiring chairman of Independent Sector, has written: "We all have to have something to work for outside ourselves, something bigger than ourselves. The unhappiest people are the ones who never escape the prison of self, never find a cause worthier than their own frets and ailments."

Whatever the personal and political frets and ailments of today's liberals, they can find a welcome antidote in giving of themselves to help their favorite charities and causes in ways that government cannot and should not. That conservatives can do the same makes volunteerism not only a bipartisan but a wholly American virtue.

CALVIN MAYNE
Rochester, New York

ORDER YOUR NEW FACTS ON FILE® TITLES TODAY

1. ***GETTING THE MOST OUT OF WASHINGTON***
Using Congress to Move the Federal Bureaucracy
by Sen. William Cohen and Kenneth Lasson
How best to utilize your elected officials in getting the benefits and services that are rightfully yours. Ways to appeal bureaucratic decisions, writing letters and making calls, information on privacy and freedom of information.
256 pp. 6x9. $15.95 hc, ISBN 0-87196-537-2.

2. ***BRANDNAMES***
Who Owns What
by George and Diane Frankenstein
Identifies the companies behind over 15,000 brandnames. Company profiles include headquarters location, phone, chief executive, corporate overview, outstanding stock and exchange, and all brandnames produced.
348 pp. 7x10. $45.00 hc, ISBN 0-87196-420-1

3. ***CONSUMER DRUG DIGEST***
by American Society of Hospital Pharmacists
Guide to over 200 generic drugs (80% of all prescriptions written) plus over the counter medications, includes side effects, drug interactions, precautions.
494 pp. 6x9. $19.95 hc, ISBN 0-87196-554-2.

4. ***THE PATIENT'S GUIDE TO MEDICAL TESTING***
by Cathey Pinckney and Edward Pinckney, M.D.
Discusses 700+ medical tests in accurate, understandable detail. Gives results, accuracy, cost, risks, and discomfort involved.
336 pp. 6x9. $17.95 hc, ISBN 0-87196-614-X.

To order: **Facts On File**
460 Park Ave. S. New York, N.Y. 10016
attn: S. Hertz WM483

To order books in this ad, circle the number corresponding to the title, fill out this order form, and mail to the above address. N.Y. & Calif. residents add sales tax. Postage and handling is $2.00 for the first book, $1.00 every book additionally. Order all four books, shipped postage free. Completely satisfied or money back.

☐ check or m.o. enc. ☐ VISA ☐ MC
☐ DC ☐ AE
Card # _____ exp. date _____
Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Book 1 2 3 4
☐ I wish to receive your catalog.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Washington, V.D.

Re: "Tilting at Windmills," October, ". . . tendency of federal employees to prefer work in Washington. . . ." Surely you jest! Among federal employees I know (and I know a bunch), a tour in Washington, D.C. (or even frequent visits) is about as welcome as a case of Herpes II—and considered to be about as enduring.

E. WILLIAMS
Anchorage, Alaska

Not to Mention His BS

About the Casey/Neuharth item in "Tilting at Windmills" [November]:

As a holder of the Bronze Star Medal (BSM), the Army Commendation Medal (ARCOM), the National Defense Service Medal (NDSM), the Vietnam Service Medal (VSM), and the Good Conduct Medal (GCM), I am aware of the luster their acronyms add to my copy of DD 214 (separation from active service).

Imagine how William J. Casey feels. Upon honorably departing his post as director of the CIA, his discharge papers will describe his highest decoration, the Distinguished Intelligence Medal, as DIM.

DON WINTER
Washington, D.C.

YOU CAN HELP

Sometimes it's easy to forget how much **The Washington Monthly** depends on its readers. Our Memos of the Month come almost entirely from you. Clippings from local papers mailed to us inspire many of the items in Tidbits and Outrages and Tilting at Windmills. Readers also help us in countless other ways, calling with tips for stories, giving their friends subscriptions, or just making sure we're on the shelves of their local newsstands, bookstores, and libraries.

This is to thank those of you who've given us assistance—and to urge even more of you to join in. We really do need your help. If you send us a story idea, a Tidbit, an Outrage, or a Memo, you can count on us to protect your identity if you do not want it disclosed.

If you happen to live in the Washington area you may be able to volunteer here at the office to help us with typing, envelope stuffing, proofreading, typesetting, paste-up, or circulation work. Just drop us a note telling us the kind of work you're interested in, your experience, and the days and hours you're available each week. Send it to:

Carol Trueblood, The Washington Monthly
1711 Connecticut Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20009

The Washington Monthly

The Washington Monthly

Editor in Chief Charles Peters. *Editors* Phillip Keisling, Timothy Noah, Jonathan Rowe. *Contributing Editors* Jonathan Alter, Thomas N. Bethell, Tom Bethell, Marjorie Boyd, Taylor Branch, Gregg Easterbrook, James Fallows, Robert M. Kaus, Michael Kinsley, Nicholas Lemann, Suzannah Lessard, Arthur Levine, Joseph Nocera, Thomas Redburn, Leonard Reed, Walter Shapiro. *Editorial Advisory Board* Graham Allison, James David Barber, Edgar Cahn, David Halberstam, Murray Kempton, Richard Reeves, Hugh Sidey. *Assistant to the Editor* Carol Trueblood.

Publisher James Rice. *Art Director* Bevi Chagnon. *Advertising Director* Louie Hallie. *Publishing Assistant* Teresa Riordan. *Circulation Director* Madelyn Colnes. *Interns* Anne E. Depue, Ben Holmes, Jill E. Pearlman.

Proofreaders and Volunteers Susan Adams, Dave Andrusko, Jane Beachner, Cynthia Brumfield, Alan Cook, Cecelia Cunilio, Deena Flinchum, Dana Frix, James Gibney, Cary Hoagland, Janice Hughes, Quinith Janssen, Marybeth Kerrigan, Shela Turpin-Forster, Anne T. Weinstein, Bill Wheatley, Millie Wyman, Gail Younce.

Published monthly except combined July/August issue by The Washington Monthly Company, 1711 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C., 20009, (202) 462-0128.

Copyright 1983 by The Washington Monthly Co. All rights reserved. Reproduction by any method whatsoever without permission is prohibited.

ISSN 0043-0633.

Subscription rates: U.S. and possessions: one year, $24; two years, $44; three years, $59. Additional charges per year, foreign subscriptions: Canada, $3; other, $25 air mail, $3 surface mail. Back issues, $3. Send all remittances and correspondence concerning subscriptions, undelivered copies, and changes of address to 1711 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C., 20009. For change of address, please provide four weeks' notice and return old address label.

The Washington Monthly is indexed in the Book Review Index, Public Affairs Information Service, the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, the Social Science Index, and Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory, and may be obtained on microfilm from University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48106.

Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C.

Spread the Word

Give a subscription to *The Washington Monthly* to your school or community library.

Use reply card between pages six and seven.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONTENTS

Volume Fifteen, Number Nine
December 1983

Tilting at Windmills
by Charles Peters
Estee Lauder's gift to the Pentagon. . . up Cabin Creek without a paddle. . . and other odds and ends. . . 6

Shakedown in the Boardroom
by Nicholas Goldberg
How PACs raise their money may be as corrupting as how they spend it. 14

Growth Without Inflation: Kennedy's Forgotten Prescription
by Charles Hammer
The chairman of U.S. Steel was smiling when he walked into the Oval Office. He wasn't smiling when he walked out. 20

Is the Jobs Bill Creating Jobs?
by Patricia Cohen
A report from the field. 26

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen. . .
by Alex Heard
Supreme Court guidelines for a pluralistic Chris—oops, holiday season. 30

Values, Personal Choice, and the Failures of Liberalism
by Nicholas Lemann
Whatever happened to Jimmy Carter the preacher? 33

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS BOOK SECTION

Why Paul Fussell Thinks He's Better Than You
by James Fallows
A mean-spirited new guide to social class. 36

South Vietnam: The Puppet as Puppeteer
by Jonathan Alter
After Diem, our client state was calling the shots. 42

Cheap Seats and White Knuckles
by Robert M. Kaus
The perils of economic deregulation. 45

Desert One: The Wrong Man and the Wrong Plan
by Phillip Keisling
A lot more went wrong with the Iranian rescue mission than the failure of three helicopters. 51

LETTERS 2
MEMO OF THE MONTH 13
MONTHLY JOURNALISM AWARD 19
POLITICAL BOOKNOTES 59
POLITICAL PUZZLE 41
TIDBITS AND OUTRAGES 25
WHO'S WHO 50

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TILTING AT WINDMILLS

Reports that the *Congressional Record* is not a totally faithful transcript of what actually occurs in our legislative chambers are widely suspected to be true, as are the rumors that lobbyists and members' staffs have a lot of influence on the action of our legislators, but I bet you have never encountered a smoking gun that proves them all beyond doubt.

Turn to page S 14575 of the October 25 *Record* and you will find what would appear to be a discussion on the Senate floor in which Senator Quentin Burdick of North Dakota begins his remarks, "Mr. President, I am disturbed by the earlier comments of my fellow colleagues, the Senator from Texas and the Senator from Idaho, concerning passenger bus axle weight limits on our nation's highways and bridges."

Burdick then provides a detailed and thoroughly persuasive case against favorable treatment for a bus used by Trailways and ringingly concludes, "Greyhound Bus Company would like you to insert the attached floor statement in today's *Congressional Record.*" You can see the entire chamber rising as one to cheer.

What must have happened is that in the course of faithfully following the instructions of his aide and of the Greyhound lobbyist, Senator Burdick accidentally sent the aide's memo to the recording clerk's office along with the statement to be inserted in the *Record*. . . .

How do the top officials at the Defense Department hold up under the grim responsibilities of sending men to their death in Lebanon and Grenada? Well, Susan Watters of *W* tells of seeing "Reagan appointee Ronald Lauder, deputy assistant secretary of defense, who was hosting a luncheon for NATO defense attaches at Le Pavillon. The restaurant specializes in desserts like terrine of bittersweet Kron chocolate mousse with a hazelnut and almond praline sauce, and strawberries over apple marmalade with a red wine sauce."

Watters describes Le Pavillon as Lauder's favorite hangout and quotes him as saying: "It's the best French restaurant in Washington. The ambience and the look are nice. It's one of the few places that uses real crystal and real silverware." . . .

When theatergoers of the 1920s were first exposed to Ben Hecht's and Charles MacArthur's *The Front Page*, they were supposed to have been shocked by the fact that the editor in the play was perfectly willing to see a man die to make a good news story. The shock seemed to hold true for those who saw the subsequent film versions of the play, the first starring Cary Grant and Rosalind Russell, the second starring Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau. I wonder if there will be any shock today among those who read what Maynard Parker, the editor of *Newsweek*, said about his magazine's cover story on the Beirut bombing, in which over 200 Marines lost their lives: "We're very exhilarated by this." . . .

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The recent stories about the 30th anniversary of the discovery of DNA reminded me of a writer to whom this magazine is indebted. He is James Watson, whose *Double Helix*, published a year before *The Monthly*'s birth, demonstrated that modern social institutions, in his case the world of science, could be better understood if they were viewed as an anthropologist with some sense of humor would look at the natives on some obscure island.

We have, of course, tried to use this same approach to the world of politics and government. And, as I have recently noted, an explosion of this kind of reporting has occurred in the world of business. The latest example comes from the September issue of *Harper's*, in which S.C. Gwynne tells how the interaction of the human nature of a young banker with the institutional pressures of international finance contributed to the Third World debt crisis. Here are some of his observations:

"International banking is an interesting business anyway, but what makes it more interesting in this case is that I am 25 years old, with one and a half years of banking experience. I joined that bank as a 'credit analyst' on the strength of an MA in English. Because I happened to be fluent in French, I was promoted 11 months later to loan officer and assigned to the French-speaking Arab countries of North Africa, where I made my first international calls. This is my third extended trip, and my territory has quickly expanded. I have visited 28 countries in six months.

"I am far from alone in my youth and inexperience. The world of international banking is now full of aggressive, bright, but hopelessly inexperienced lenders in their mid-twenties. They travel the world like itinerant brushmen, filling loan quotas, peddling financial wares, and living high on the hog. Their bosses are often bright but hopelessly inexperienced 29-year-old vice presidents with wardrobes from Brooks Brothers, MBAs from Wharton or Stanford, and so little credit training they would have trouble with a simple retail installment loan. *Their* bosses, sitting on the senior loan committee, are pragmatic, nuts-and-bolts bankers whose grasp of local banking is often profound, the product of 20 or 30 years of experience. But the senior bankers are fish out of water when it comes to international lending. . . .

"There is another curious aspect to this: even though the banks may allow a country such as Poland to 'reschedule' its debt—allowing it 20 years instead of ten to repay, for example—the *interest* payments keep coming. And it is interest that hits the bottom line of a bank's profit-and-loss statement. This means that Citibank can have a very good year even though many of its loans may be in serious trouble."

From another source we have learned a fact that illustrates what Gwynne means about how good the current figures can look while potentially serious trouble looms in the future: consider that Citicorp earned $221 million in the third quarter of this year while the amount of its total capital involved in loans to just five Latin American countries now stands at 174.5 percent.

"At the root of this worldwide lending problem," Gwynne continues, "is a very simple concept called 'security.' When you borrow money to buy a car, the bank takes title to the car as 'security.' If you default under the terms of your loan, the bank can sell the car and recoup the rest of its money. But international banks cannot 'tag' a banana crop in the Philippines, or grab the copper as it comes out of the mine in Chile and sell it in Chicago. In international lending, American banks frequently violate the oldest precepts of lending against security. I was taught to develop a set of rationales that would make the home office feel good about the loan, even though, technically, it was 'unsecured.'"

To investigate one loan, Gwynne flew to the Philippines, where the applicant had him met by a Mercedes with a woman inside who informed him that she and it were at his disposal.

"A year and a half after making this loan—and about a year before this loan went into nonaccrual," Gwynne continues, "I left the bank for a job with one of the big West Coast banks. By the time the borrower suspended its debt payments, *all* of the loan officers who had worked

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on it had moved on to other banks. Such rapid job movement is common in banking. The market these days is so hot that, if you have done reasonably well in your job, you can not only double your salary but you can virtually pick the city in which you would like to live. Thus many of the people who make the big international loans are not around to collect them when they go bad, and, conversely, the people who are collecting the bad loans are not the people who made them in the first place, and therefore feel only vaguely responsible."

Gwynne has now become a journalist. I think his banking experience will prove valuable to him. I wish more young journalists would seek real-world experience before they go into writing. It does help to know what you're talking about. Or at least to have developed instincts for the story, for what smells true, based on actual experience. Too many young journalists lack this sure sense of smell, because they have gone straight from school to their careers in writing.

If, for example, some disgruntled government employee came to them with a story about the lack of institutional memory in our AID, CIA, military, and state department missions abroad, they would have no idea whether he was right or wrong. Gwynne, with his life experience of a similar lack of memory at his bank, would see that there was probably a real story here and would go after it with the zeal born out of confidence. . . .

It has long been my conviction that in bureaucracy as in human beings, fat tends to concentrate around the middle. There are people at the top who make the policies and give the orders and there are some hapless souls at the bottom who actually do the work. In-between there are people who "coordinate," "monitor," and "evaluate."

Those very words appeared last month in a personnel advertisement by the District of Columbia Board of Education seeking applicants for the positions of "assistant to the assistant superintendent for division operations" and "assistant to the assistant superintendent for planning and special projects." Both jobs pay up to $46,370 a year. The board is also advertising for a "public relations specialist" who can earn $40,000.

The public relations job requires "a bachelor's degree in a communications field such as journalism, advertising, creative writing, and/or public relations." The "assistant to the assistant" jobs require a master's degree, including "six semester hours in educational administration and supervision." It is frightening to realize that our public schools are run by people who take such credentials seriously. . . .

While semester hours of education administration and degrees in communications are likely to be meaningless, actual experience is, as we saw in S.C. Gwynne's case, sometimes important. In the Department of Defense, for example, I would like to have, as the leaders who put our troops at risk, men who have been troops themselves and know how those risks taste and feel. But *The Washington Monthly* has found six top officials of the Department of Defense whose resumes show no evidence of any active duty in the military. They include such leading hawks as Richard Perle and Fred Ikle. John Lehman, the superhawk secretary of the Navy, took his risks in the reserves. As for Ronald Lauder—remember, he's the defense official who loves to eat at Le Pavillion—did he ever serve in the infantry on a submarine or in any branch of the military? No, but he was executive vice president of Estee Lauder cosmetics. . . .

The good news about our conference on neoliberalism is that more than 300 people attended, twice the number we expected. They were a lively mix of journalists like Ken Auletta, James Fallows, and Michael Kinsley; academics like James David Barber, Amatai Etzioni, and Mancur Olson; and people on the firing line like Bruce Babbitt, the governor of Arizona, Peggy Holliday, a principal from North Carolina, Bill Honig, California's school superintendent, Donald Burr, the entrepreneur who heads People Express, and Walter

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bish, the union leader who helped save Weirton Steel.

The bad news is that there were too few women and too few blacks. I suspect one reason for this is that neoliberals, in their concentration on defining their differences with conventional liberalism, neglect to give proper emphasis to areas of solidarity, of which the struggle for racial and sexual equality is surely one.

The conference started on the right note when the first panelist to speak, Bruce Babbitt, began by declaring that the Democratic party had for too long been "held in bondage by the education establishment." And it ended on what for me was just the right note when Jim Wolfe, a union official from Cincinnati, got up and said, "What this weekend has meant to me is that I don't have to think I'm a weirdo anymore. I've found that I'm not alone in what I think, that there are people from all over the country who feel the same way."

For those of you who weren't there, here's a revised and abbreviated—out of mercy for those who were—version of the speech I gave at the conference:

When A Neoliberal's Manifesto [*The Washington Monthly*, May 1983] was published, I received a number of warmly congratulatory letters from prominent political figures. But in the months that followed, most of these people seemed less than eager to wear the neoliberal label in public. I was reminded of the person who, in a similar situation, wrote, "I have always been a secret admirer of yours—and hope to remain so."

I understand the politicians' problem. Long before I became a journalist I was one of them. It was as an editor that I came up with the word "neoliberal." The occasion was *The Washington Monthly*'s tenth anniversary party, and I was responding to an article that had described us as neoconservative. I said: "We're not neoconservative, we're neoliberal." To that sophisticated audience, the term had immediate meaning. But as a politician in West Virginia, would I ever have gone up Cabin Creek and proclaimed, "We're not neoconservatives, we're neoliberals"?

Of course I wouldn't have, because there is no reason to expect the average man to understand "neoliberal," and that's why I think we've got to find a better word if we want this movement to grow, as I'm confident it can.

The last thing we should want to do is separate ourselves from others by using words they don't understand, for neoliberalism is first and foremost a movement of community. We believe in a society that shares its burdens and rewards. We reject the Me Decade and the proliferation of special-interest groups that was its political manifestation. We reject liberal leaders who cater to the special-interest groups of the left just as we do conservatives who cater to those of the right. We want a leader who will challenge us to rise above our personal and group interests when they conflict with those of the community.

All this doesn't mean that neoliberals don't disagree. There are real differences among us that mean there is little danger the movement will become monolithic. For example, while most of us favor a military or national service draft as a means of bringing people of all classes together in service to their country, some, like Taylor Branch and Michael Kinsley, vigorously oppose the idea.

Some support an industrial policy that would favor certain industries. While others of us agree that there is a de facto industrial policy now that is bad and should be faced and changed, we do not support concentrating our bets on a high-tech future. We believe in a policy that encourages economic growth in the form of letting a thousand flowers bloom because we are not at all sure which ones will be the biggest winners.

I also reject the Atari Democrat label because it implies that our only concerns are economic, when in fact we are committed to a broad program of social justice and rededication to the ideals of the Declaration of Independence.

Which brings us back to what do Neoliberals agree about?

First of all—and most important of all—we are liberals. There are large areas in which we are in almost complete agreement with other liberals—from protection of the environment to opposition to any form of racial, religious, or sexual discrimination.

Second, we are realists. We

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

criticize liberalism not to destroy it but to renew it by freeing it from its myths, from its old automatic responses in favor of unions and big government and against business and the military.

In my own life there were three experiences where the gap between liberal myth and reality was dramatic.

First, as a beginning lawyer in the late fifties, I was assigned to represent a good many defendants in criminal cases—perhaps 20 in all. I came to the experience with the image of "The Wrong Man" in my mind. Remember the Hitchcock film? The police have arrested an innocent man and you are going to be the bright and brave young David who saves him from the Goliath prosecution.

Well, I never *had* an innocent man. They were *all* guilty. The truth is that the police seldom got the wrong man. In difficult cases they usually didn't catch anyone. The people they did arrest had usually been apprehended as they were passing color television sets out the store window.

Yet the wrong man myth continues to dominate the liberal mind. An entire episode of a recent "60 Minutes" program was devoted to such a case. They do happen, but they're relatively rare.

Another liberal myth about crime is that practically all criminals could be rehabilitated. My experience was that this was true of only about half—and they were almost all young, non-violent, first offenders or people who had committed hot-blooded violent crimes during family arguments.

But the criminals who were guilty of cold-blooded violence were scary people. Several years ago I read that one I defended back in West Virginia had broken out of jail in Washington. I spent the next few days praying that he had not learned I was living here. These are people who could not be rehabilitated by a hundred of the country's most brilliant psychiatrists working around the clock, and they need to be kept locked up—not as punishment but to protect the rest of us.

My second reality experience was getting to know the federal civil service when I came to Washington in the early sixties. I had just left the West Virginia legislature where, as a typical young liberal, I had drafted, sponsored, and acted as floor manager for the state's first civil service law. Now, in my first experience with the executive branch I found the civil service was not at all what I and other liberals imagined it to be. Founded to protect the brave, it had attracted the cautious, too many people who wanted job security more than anything else, too many people who lacked the drive and imagination of the risk-taker, and worst of all, too many people who were not concerned with the public because they were not accountable to the public. They could not be fired unless their agency's budget was cut, and it was to the avoidance of that unhappy possibility that whatever dedication they could muster was devoted.

My third reality experience was with the way the government agency for which I worked, the Peace Corps, was covered by the press. Since the Peace Corps was a liberal idea, we got automatically favorable coverage from most reporters. And the few who were hostile looked only for scandal. None tried to discover what was really happening with our programs.

I started *The Washington Monthly* because I suspected that what I saw wrong with the coverage of the Peace Corps was wrong with the coverage of public institutions generally. I wanted to uncover what was really wrong with those institutions and try to figure out what should be done about it.

I was fascinated by the fact that a lot of energetic and thoughtful young people were attracted to that task, so attracted that they pursued it at considerable financial sacrifice. To me this was the first suggestion of the beginnings of a movement. Then I thought it was a movement devoted to a new kind of journalism combining diligent and imaginative investigation with thoughtful analysis of possible causes and possible solutions. But when I found we were tending to agree on the analysis, I knew something larger was afoot.

Reduced to its essence, that analysis was that this nation had become the victim of a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

politics of selfishness, selfishness that was both personal and institutional. Everyone wanted his tax break or his wage increase without regard to whether it was in the interest of the country as a whole.

What we saw as the answer to this problem was a politics of responsibility, of sharing, *of doing our part.*

In the fifties "responsibility" became a code word in the establishment to communicate that the person so described could be counted on to wear a gray flannel suit and never rock the boat. Now is the time to redeem it from that sorry usage and restore its true power and nobility.

A politics of responsibility would mean that we would no longer insist on this tax subsidy or that wage increase without regard to its impact on the national community, that where service or sacrifice was necessary in the common interest, we would do our part, whether that meant enlisting in the military for two years or simply reading to an old lady or giving up our claim to government benefits like Social Security when we're well enough off anyway and there are others who need more.

"We do our part." When I was a boy that was the slogan of the NRA and it stirred something in the average man never seen before or since in this country. Literally millions of citizens proudly marched in parades to demonstrate their determination to share the burden. And I can tell you that on Cabin Creek every little store and every filling station had a sign in the window saying, "We Do Our Part."

In institutional terms doing our part means forgoing what's good for your company or your agency when it's not good for the country.

In electoral terms it means voting for a candidate not on the basis of what he has done for you or your special group but on the basis of what he has done for the community as a whole. You can't expect a politician to rise above the special interest unless you let him know you'll support him if he does.

Doing our part doesn't mean we have to be suckers. If my rich Aunt Alice has to give up the Social Security she uses to go to Paris, your deadbeat brother-in-law should give up the unemployment compensation he spends in Miami Beach. In foreign affairs, we should say to Japan "we'll do our part in our mutual defense and we'll do our part on free trade, but you've got to do yours too." At home the worker who has taken a wage cut to help his company compete—and I think this is vitally important in many of our industries—has a right to ask managers and owners to take a cut too, and if the sacrifice works, and the company prospers, he gets his fair share of the profits.

A politics of responsibility is going to require a public that knows and understands what's wrong with the government well enough to vote for candidates who can make things right. This means a lot more of the kind of reality journalism to

1984-85 Congressional Fellowship Program for Journalists

The American Political Science Association invites broadcast and print journalists to apply for the 31st annual Congressional Fellowship Program. The program, November 1984–August 1985, provides an opportunity to work as a Congressional aide for 10 months, attend weekly seminars with leading politicians and scholars, receive a stipend of $16,000, plus other benefits.

The deadline for application is December 1, 1983. Applicants should have 2–10 years experience in journalism, should be able to demonstrate interest in national politics, and should have a record of excellence in reporting. To apply, send a detailed resume, a 500-word statement on the relevance of the Fellowship Program to your professional goals, and samples of your best professional work (clips, scripts, tapes or videotapes). In addition, three professional references or letters of recommendation should be sent by December 15, 1983.

Address all materials to:
DIRECTOR, Congressional Fellowship Program
The American Political Science Association
1527 New Hampshire Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
PHONE: (202) 483-2512

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which *The Washington Monthly* has been dedicated. It means radically improved instruction in history and politics in our schools. And I think it means having a radical increase in the number of people who have worked in government.

The best way to learn the reality of government and the problems it faces is to experience it first-hand. That's why I think it is important to open up roughly half of the government jobs to short-term—two- to five-year—appointments to people from all over the country who could not only learn but bring to Washington and to their state capitals a feeling for grass-roots reality that the average civil servant lost long ago.

At the heart of the politics of responsibility is choosing work that counts. Too many people are devoting their lives to making money or to achieving the status of being professionals, or to simply proving they have good taste by going to the latest "in" place for their vacation or buying the right car or having the right books on their shelves and the right magazines on their coffee tables. There's nothing wrong with making money or being a professional or having good taste if—and this is crucial—it doesn't divert you from doing work that counts.

Can such radical change as I have been describing actually take place?

I believe radical change can happen because I've seen it happen. By 1941 the cruel depression of the thirties turned into 40 years of prosperity. The vicious anti-Catholic feeling that cost John Kennedy several states in 1960 had almost entirely disappeared, thanks to his presidency and the papacy of John XXIII, by the time of Kennedy's death in 1963. And who could have dreamed in 1960 that just a decade later black and white football players would be hugging each other on the sidelines when Alabama scored a touchdown?

If you think community is unobtainable, John Kennedy, in 1946, when he was only 29 years old and campaigning for the first time for Congress, described how community had been attained during World War II:

"Most of the courage shown in the war came from men's understanding of their interdependence on each other. Men were saving other men's lives at the risk of their own simply because they realized that perhaps the next day their lives would be saved in turn. And so there was built up during the war a great feeling of comradeship and fellowship and loyalty.

"Now they miss the feeling of interdependence, that sense of working together for a common cause. In civilian life, they feel they have only themselves to depend on. They miss their wartime friends, and the understanding of their wartime friendships. One veteran told me that when he brought one of his Army friends to his home, his wife said, 'What can you possibly see in O'Brien?' The veteran remembered O'Brien in Italy, walking with him from Sicily to the Po Valley, every bloody mile of the way. He knew what he could see in O'Brien."

The politics of responsibility can be accused of being idealistic. And of course it is just that. Remember what Woodrow Wilson said: "They call me an idealist. That's how I know I'm an American." The way we have behaved as a people in recent years has made that line sound naive, even absurd. Let's make it sound right again.

—*Charles Peters*

There's a New State in Washington

Our neighbors are the State Department, the Kennedy Center, most Government Agencies and many tourist attractions. We accommodate our guests in spacious suites, complete with kitchens, for less than the price of most hotel rooms in Washington. It's a wonderful new state that you should visit soon.

STATE · PLAZA

FORMERLY SHERRY TOWERS HOTEL

2117 E St. NW, Washington, DC 20037

(202) 861-8200 Call us now for reservations. (800) 424-2859

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MEMO OF THE MONTH

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

July 26, 1983

83 JUL 26 P5:53

MEMORANDUM TO ASSISTANT SECRETARIES AND BUREAU DIRECTORS

Subject: Toasts and Other Public Statements for the Secretary

Toasts and other public statements provide opportunities for the Secretary to make important policy points and substantive comments that contribute to the success of a visit. Too often the Secretary has been disappointed in the quality--in terms of both substance and eloquence--of the public remarks (chiefly toasts) submitted for his use. It is clear that in the rush of preparing the numerous papers tasked for visits and trips, bureaus have not given these statements the attention they require.

A major problem is the lack of bureau front office attention to the purpose and themes of toasts. Your involvement--and that of your deputies--early in the preparation process is needed to assure that these questions are addressed before drafting begins.

S/P has an important role to play in both the style and substance of toasts and other public statements. Once the bureau has decided the objective of the toast, the drafting officer should consult with the S/P speechwriter. Early in the drafting process, the proposed toast should be submitted to the S/P staff assistant, who will obtain the clearances of both the substantive and speechwriting sides of S/P.

The final cleared toast should be submitted under cover of an information memorandum which sets out the purpose and major points covered. In addition, the overall scope paper for the visit or trip should explain how the various public statements fit into the strategy for achieving our objectives.

Your personal involvement is key to the quality of the Secretary's public remarks. Please ensure that your bureau colleagues appreciate the importance which you and the Secretary attach to them.

Charles Hill

Charles Hill
Executive Secretary

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SHAKE IT BOARD

How PACs raise their money may be as corrupting as how they spend it.

by Nicholas Goldberg

In June 1978 the head of the Atlanta division of Winn-Dixie Stores, Inc., one of the largest grocery chains in America, summoned each of his upper- and mid-level subordinates to his office one at a time. Most got the good news they had been hoping for: Winn-Dixie was giving each of them a juicy bonus of $2,000 to $2,500 for a job well done. Then came the bad news: the boss suggested that each make a contribution to the company's political action committee to help Winn-Dixie increase its political clout in Washington. Lest any of them take the suggestion too lightly, included in the envelope with each bonus check was a solicitation signed by the division manager. "You knew what the point was," remarked one of the solicited employees later to *Washington Post* reporter Morton Mintz. "I gave in the interest of my career," said another. "I had the feeling it would be a plus if I did."

Mintz's story appeared in 1980 and was quickly forgotten. PACs were not yet cover-story material. Today, of course, you can't pick up a magazine or sift through your daily barrage of direct mail solicitations without seeing dire warnings of how the $80 million that PACs spent for the 1982 elections is corrupting American politics. "The power of PACs," a *Time* magazine cover story proclaimed recently, "threatens to undermine America's system of representative democracy."

But what about the potential corruption in the system by which PACs get the money in the first place? Except for Mintz's article, the press has consistently neglected to explore the other side of the story: PAC fund-raising methods. In fact, many journalists often leave the distinct impression that the money contributed by corporate PACs—$30 million in 1982—is money that might be used for other corporate purposes.

The truth is that the likes of Exxon, Burger King, and Bechtel aren't spending a dime from their company's coffers; it has been illegal, since 1907, for corporations to make political contributions. The $30 million corporate PACs contributed in the 1982 elections came almost entirely from another source—"contributions" from managerial employees.

Why would an employee voluntarily give part

Nicholas Goldberg is a New York writer.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DOWN THE ROOM

Illustration by Johanna Vogelsang

of his paycheck back to his employer, relinquishing all control over how it is spent, rather than donate it himself to the candidate or cause of his choice? According to Mike McCarville, director of the National Association of Business PACs, employees are excited at the chance to "become involved in the political system without spending a whole lot of personal time at it." In other words, they're eager to give away their money, but they don't want to be bothered deciding who to give it to.

Sure. But take a closer look at how successful PAC fund-raising efforts are and you'll begin to suspect that something more than irresponsible generosity is involved. In 1980 the contribution rate among adult Americans for all campaigns—federal, state, or local—was just 9 percent. The average contribution to a presidential campaign was $49.50. Yet among Winn-Dixie's corporate executives, the contribution rate was about 74 percent, and the average contribution in 1980 was $1,526. Part of the difference can be explained by the executives' higher salaries. But *that* much difference?

What accounts for most of the difference is a technique that your local Mafia foot soldier is intimately familiar with: it's called the "shakedown." True, fund-raisers for corporate PACs employ gentler methods of persuasion. But the basic idea is the same—to get along, you gotta go along.

At Dart Industries, executives have been encouraged to think of PAC donations as "an investment in your future and that of your kids, rather than as a contribution." Employees who chose not to invest in their kids' future, or who invested in smaller amounts than those laid out in the DARTPAC "donation guidelines," have received follow-up letters reminding them that their contributions are being compared to their salaries. If that failed, supervisors invited subordinates to solicitation meetings. Still no response? The final solicitation has been one-on-one, which most PAC managers agree is the most effective fund-raising technique. There's nothing like a veiled reference to being transferred to Minot, North Dakota, to suddenly kindle the spirit of philanthropy.

Dart's techniques have proved even more effective than those of Winn-Dixie. Approximately 83 percent of Dart's executives contributed to its

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PAC in 1978—an off-election year—and in 1980 the average contribution was $1,030. DARTPAC received a very different response, however, when soliciting stockholders, who presumably should share the same commitment of executives to ensuring that the company's interests were protected in Washington. Less than 0.6 percent of its shareholders contributed to the PAC in 1980. Their average contribution was $27.45.

Other firms use variations on the same theme. At the Eton Corporation, executives are asked to contribute "to the legal and financial limits to protect the future of your company and your family." Employees who don't pay up are resolicited in a letter expressing management's "disappointment" in them. Many companies computerize data on employee contributing and some collect for their PACs the same way the government collects its taxes—by withholding from paychecks. After all the veiled threats to their employment future, the reminders that the boss is watching, the heart-to-hearters in the executive suite, the message to the employee is subtle yet unmistakable: PAC contributions aren't just for those who *want* to get involved in politics but "donations" that employees should feel professionally obliged to supply. DARTPAC's statement of principles pulls no punches: "As employees of a company. . . we have an individual responsibility to actively engage in the political process for the purpose of preserving the free enterprise system." A noble sentiment to be sure. The problem is, the employee who turns over $1,000 to his corporate PAC has no control over the purposes to which it is put, and some of those purposes may be directly contrary to his beliefs. For example, a libertarian employee of Dart Industries (now Dart & Kraft) may be pleased to see that Justin Dart, who heads the company, likes to spend PAC money on promoters of the free market, but would be chagrined that Dart also is a blustery hawk on foreign affairs.

As former Representative Bud Brown, a Republican, once observed, "To say that. . . contributions are 'collected' by these special-interest groups is often the wrong characterization. 'Forced' is often more correct. . . . Often the individual has no choice but to give, no choice as to how much he will give, and no voice in who shall receive his financial support for a political campaign. . . . The political action committee system is often a denial of the individual's basic right to free political expression."

Friendly persuasion

Those jaded souls who are constantly wary of the best intentions of government will doubtless be unsurprised to learn that this situation arose largely thanks to the election law reforms enacted in the wake of Watergate. Those reforms, which were designed to reduce the influence of money in politics, have clearly backfired, leaving corporations with the best of both worlds: a powerful way of influencing the political process without having it affect the bottom line. And even though corporations are legally prohibited from using physical force, job discrimination, or other forms of coercion in raising money, the fact of the matter is, they don't really have to.

So successful have corporate PACs been that some believe the very act of asking employees to contribute to a PAC is coercive. The International Association of Machinists, in a recent court suit brought against the Federal Election Commission, alleged that the whole system was "inherently coercive" and infringed on the employees' First Amendment right not to contribute. "Basically, it's a kickback request," alleges John Silard, an attorney for the IAM. "Corporations put the heat on employees, and employees feel that their careers hang in the balance." The Supreme Court, however, disagrees. Last spring, it upheld a U.S. Court of Appeals judgment against the IAM in which the court found proof of corporate coercion falling "woefully short." Very few corporate executives, the court had noted, had come forward to complain about their employer's fund-raising methods.

But is that surprising? "Of course individuals haven't come forward," says Jim Turner, Silard's partner on the case. "How can they when their jobs are on the line?" The employees quoted in Mintz's story refused to talk unless they were guaranteed anonymity. The pressure to ignore or rationalize dubious fund-raising methods is enormous—particularly among the kind of ambitious people who find their way into management jobs in companies that are big and powerful enough to have PACs.

At first glance, the IAM's suit seems like a long-overdue move to defend the rights of unorganized citizens against the pressures of big institutions. But the suit actually is only the latest battle in a long struggle for political clout between organized labor and big business. And what makes the IAM suit particularly interesting is that in making its case, the union relied on

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At the Eton Corporation, the message is subtle yet unmistakable: executives are asked to contribute to their PAC "to protect the future of your company and your family."

some of the same arguments that conservatives have traditionally used against labor's PACs.

Consider a recent case brought before the Federal Election Commission by the Washington Legal Foundation, a self-described "pro-business law firm" out to undercut union influence in federal elections. Archie Brown, a Texas trucker, alleged to the FEC that he had been denied membership in a new Teamsters local because he had refused to contribute to DRIVE, the Teamsters's PAC. Brown claimed that the local systematically forced new members to contribute to the PAC, over which they had no effective influence.

The FEC investigated Brown's charges, but after noting that Brown could not document the alleged coercion, it accepted the union's argument that he'd been rejected for being delinquent in paying his dues. The FEC noted, "Although by the union officials' own admission there has been an almost 100 percent success rate of DRIVE commitments from those applying for membership at the union hall, it can be argued that the business agents were merely very persuasive. . . ." The Teamsters, of course, are well known for their methods of persuasion.

Tillman tiptoe

There obviously are differences between how the PACS of unions and corporations operate. Corporations, for example, have far more leverage over their employees by nature of being able to fire them. Still, both labor and management have resorted to similar strategies in their long struggle for electoral influence. And understanding this helps explain how an ostensible effort at election law reform ended up legitimizing the coercion of individuals by large institutions.

Toward the end of the 19th century, public concern increasingly focused on the concentration of wealth and its effect on American politics. In 1894 Elihu Root warned the Constitutional Convention of the State of New York of the need to prevent "the great railroad companies, the great insurance companies, the great telephone companies, the great aggregations of wealth, from using their corporate funds, directly or indirectly, to send members of the legislature to these halls in order to vote for their protection and the advancement of their interests as against those of the public."

In response to such fear, in 1907, Congress passed the Tillman Act, which forbade corporations from using their earnings to influence federal campaigns. Among the Tillman Act's most vocal supporters was Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, who argued that huge campaign contributions were "endangering the endurance of our Republic in its purity and its essence."

But Gompers's comments were a bit disingenuous. The growth of organized labor in the first part of the century, and the increased importance in electoral politics of labor unions in the New Deal years, soon showed that corporations were not alone in being able to rally vast sums of money to further their political interests. According to one estimate, labor unions spent more than $750,000 for Roosevelt in 1936—the equivalent of several million dollars today. That year, the United Mine Workers was the largest contributor to the Democratic National Committee.

In response to growing labor influence, Congress in 1943 extended the ban on campaign contributions to include labor unions. But there was

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a loophole: the law forbade only direct contributions to candidates in general elections.

In response, the Congress of Industrial Organizations set the stage for today's system by establishing the nation's first PAC, named appropriately enough, the Political Action Committee. Operating under the chairmanship of Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, the PAC included a national office and 14 regional offices that advised and coordinated numerous state and local PACs. It spent hundreds of thousands of dollars for the fourth-term reelection of Franklin D. Roosevelt and for the election of a "progressive" Congress.

What was unique about the PAC was that, in deference to the requirements of the 1943 ban, all contributions to candidates in general elections were financed solely from voluntary contributions, knowingly and freely made, by members of affiliated unions. For other elections the PAC could spend the dues of union members as it saw fit. In 1947 the American Federation of Labor followed the CIO's lead, establishing Labor's League for Political Education, which operated on the same principles.

In a period of growing antiunion sentiment, labor's rising political power was not viewed favorably by the conservative 80th Congress, though many liberals rationalized the system as a way to counteract what they viewed as the disproportionate power of their political foes. In the late 1940s, the Senate set up a Special Committee on Campaign Expenditures, which investigated the role of the CIO's political action committee in the 1944 and 1946 elections. The committee found no "clear-cut violation" of election laws, but noted that "the scale of operations of some of these [labor] organizations is impressive. . . ."

On the recommendation of the special committee, the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 included a section banning labor from making campaign contributions, including contributions for primaries. But a loophole was still left open: the legislation did not specifically ban contributions from funds made up of voluntary contributions, like LLPE and PAC. So the union funds remained in business. When the CIO merged with the American Federation of Labor in 1955, they combined their organizations to form the Committee on Political Eduation (COPE) and between 1947 and 1971 hundreds of individual unions, including the Seafarers Union, the United Auto Workers, the Teamsters, the painters' union, the pipefitters, and others, set up committees to solicit campaign contributions from members.

While labor was taking advantage of the law's loophole in the 1950s, corporations were asleep on the job. Then, in 1961, the American Medical Association set up AMPAC to solicit contributions from doctors to fight such proposals as Medicare. (The subsequent rise in doctors' incomes as a result of Medicare does suggest that PAC expenditures sometimes *aren't* used in the best interests of their contributors.) The business community quickly realized it could do the same, and in 1963, Business-Industry PAC was set up by officials of the National Association of Manufacturers. By 1968, BIPAC was spending over $500,000 a year, all of it consisting of voluntary contributions from businessmen around the country. A number of corporations, particularly investment houses and aerospace firms, set up "good government funds," which operated on the same principles.

Labor pains

Yet by 1971, the number of business funds was still less than 50, and most of them were industry-sponsored rather than company-run. That changed dramatically in 1971. The Supreme Court was hearing arguments on *Pipefitters Local 562 vs. U.S.*, a case charging the Pipefitters union with maintaining a fund in violation of the 1947 ban. The union had lost in two lower courts, and labor leaders were worried that the case might serve as a precedent to undo the system of voluntary funds created in 1947. So the unions took their case to Congress, which was then working out the details of what was to become the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971.

At labor's urging, an amendment was introduced to preempt an adverse decision by the Court that gave statutory legitimacy once and for all to the system that had developed. But after labor's congressional allies introduced the amendment, House Republicans pressed for a quid pro quo: if unions could continue to solicit campaign contributions, corporations should explicitly be given the same right.

Congress ultimately enacted a compromise: unions could solicit their members and corporations could solicit a "roughly comparable group"—stockholders. The unions weren't pleased, but it wasn't exactly unfair; corporations, after all, represent their stockholders' interests just as unions represent the interests of their members.

Unfortunately, it didn't stop there. In 1975, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FEC, at the urging of the Sun Oil Company, gave a radically new interpretation to the 1971 law. According to the FEC, corporations could solicit not just stockholders, but *all* employees. Congressional leaders were infuriated at what they considered a gross misinterpretation of the 1971 law. But Congress succumbed to lobbying from the Chamber of Commerce and other business groups and adopted yet another compromise in 1976. Corporations could now solicit PAC contributions not just from shareholders, but from "executive and administrative personnel," whenever and however they wanted.

The SUNPAC decision and the subsequent amendments by Congress spawned an explosion of corporate PACs. At the end of 1975, labor PACs outnumbered corporate PACs 226 to 139. In the six months following the SUNPAC decisions, 150 new corporate PACs were created, and by the end of 1976 they outnumbered labor PACs 433 to 224. Today, there are 379 labor PACs—and 1,512 corporate PACs.

The irony is striking: unions, in pursuing their immediate political objective of maintaining statutory legitimacy for a system they'd created from a loophole, set in motion forces that led to an overwhelming explosion of wealthy corporate PACs. So today, in terms of financial leverage, unions are probably no more influential, and perhaps even less so, than corporations were before either could contribute. Meanwhile, corporations can now do indirectly, and cheaply, exactly what they were prohibited from doing directly nearly 80 years ago.

This state of affairs should not, however, be viewed in the narrow context of the long-standing battle between capital and labor for influence in American politics. The harm goes far beyond that. Instead of protecting citizens from "effects of aggregated wealth on politics," the system now encourages wealth to play a big part. Instead of striking a balance between organizational rights and the rights of those individuals who disagree with the majority's political views, the system encourages big institutions to manipulate dissenters. Instead of promoting personal responsibility and political accountability, the system coerces individuals to give money with no clear idea of where it is going or what they will get for it. Almost everyone now recognizes that the current system of financing campaigns, supposedly revamped after Watergate, is as corrupt and unfair as ever. It's time the courts, the FEC, and the public recognize that this is true of the way PACs are financed as well. ■

THE WASHINGTON MONTHLY

Journalism Award

for September 1983 is presented to

Paul McGrath
Chicago Magazine

The unnecessary and costly public office building is a familiar story. What distinguishes this dissection of Chicago's version is McGrath's thorough account of the building's dubious origins, and his explanation of how its widely acclaimed architectural design has helped prevent thorough scrutiny.

Michael Millenson
Chicago Tribune

Millenson's three-part series on the Food and Drug Administration does far more than recount Reagan's budget cuts; it delves into the agency's inner workings to describe its laxity in such areas as recording adverse drug reactions and policing defective medical devices.

S.C. Gwynne
Harper's

See "Tilting at Windmills," page 7.

The Monthly Journalism Award is presented each month to the best newspaper or magazine article (or series of articles) on our political system. Nominations from any newspaper or magazine in the country are welcome. The subject can be government in its federal, state, or municipal manifestation.

The award for articles published in November will be announced in the February issue. Nominations will close December 15. Nominations should be accompanied by two copies of the article or articles.

DIARY OF A DARK HORSE
The 1980 Anderson Presidential Campaign

By MARK BISNOW, with a Foreword by Tom Wicker. "The most lucidly detailed account, day-by-day and sometimes hour-by-hour, ever written on a political campaign... It is a fascinating and luminous document."
$24.95 —JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY PRESS
P.O. Box 3697, Carbondale, IL 62901

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by Charles Hamme

Growth

Kennedy'

The Washington Post FINAL

Times Herald

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 1962

TEN CENTS

U. S. Steel Increases Price by $6 a Ton; President 'Hopping Mad,' Justice to Act

D.C. Stands Pat on Jams At Stadium

Viet Cong Rebels Kill 2 Wounded Americans

Reds Spurn Last Plea on A-Test Ban

Kefauver Also Plans An Inquiry

Church Merger Groups To Expand Negotiations

Portrait in Parting

Kennedys Will Meet Shah of Iran Arriving Today With Wife on Visit

Cuba to Release 54 Prisoners Saturday

The Washington Post FINAL

Times Herald

THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 1962

TEN CENTS

Kennedy Hints Action on Steel

FCC Sends 'Bug' Case To Justice

GOP Blast at Kennedy Jeered by Democrats

Release Set For Guards, Reservists

$6-Ton Rise Is Declared Unjustified

Kennedy Greets Shah, Notes Similarity of Aims

Hobby Hatched From Eggs

The Washington Post FINAL

Times Herald

FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 1962

TEN CENTS

Blough Defends Steel Price Increase; Federal Grand Jury Inquiry Opens

Area Urged To Set Pace On Housing

Berlin Crisis Eased, Clay Tells Rusk

U. S. Probes Report Here Of Estes Gift

U. S. to Probe For Evidence Of Conspiracy

Industry Chief Denies Acting Irresponsibly

That economic policy alternative they say the Democrats don't have—could the blueprint lie not in some hazy future but in a forgotten glory of the past?

The President's Council of Economic Advisors certainly thought it had something in January 1965 when it trumpeted: "These four years of expansion have demonstrated that the American economy is capable of sustained balanced growth in peacetime. No law of nature compels a free-market economy to suffer from recessions and periodic inflation." One year later President Lyndon Johnson, in his annual economic report, was able to crow:

"A few years ago much was heard of the 'European economic miracle.' Today, across the Atlantic and around the world, one hears again of the 'American economic miracle.' We have again shown the world what free men and a free economy can achieve."

Needless to say, nobody's talking these days about an American economic miracle. Since Johnson the economy has deteriorated to the point where, with 9 percent unemployment and 4 percent inflation, President Reagan can claim economic victory—and get away with it. A major reason is that many Americans accept without argument his explanation that he can do no better because of the mistakes of his Democratic predecessors.

That view, however, is a perversion of history. For it was President John Kennedy, a Democrat, who discovered—or rather stumbled across—the one thing our economy needs most: a tool to control inflation without causing recession. Kennedy's discovery was the same one every teacher makes when walking into a classroom where a

Charles Hammer is a Shawnee, Kansas, writer.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

without Inflation:

Forgotten Prescription

few children are grabbing and fighting. It doesn't help to say, "Class! Class!" You have to name names and punish those who are causing the trouble. In the case of the economy, this means getting tough when it's necessary with the people who have the power to raise wages and prices—namely, corporate officers and union leaders.

Kennedy's successors haven't understood this; they've tried to control inflation largely through fiscal and monetary policies that have often depressed the entire economy. Kennedy also used fiscal and monetary policies, but he knew they were not enough, in part because they often left corporate officers and union members immune. That's why he was willing to go bare-knuckled against the toughest delinquent in the American industrial classroom, becoming the first president to make vigorous use of behavior modification in economics.

I still recall vividly how Kennedy, in April 1962, went on national television to denounce a $6 per ton price increase by the nation's largest steelmakers. As a young reporter for the *Kansas City Star* I read with relish the subsequent wire service dispatches describing how Big Steel fought back but then relented. This time, greedy behavior was not reinforced by the reward of a price increase. Instead, the delinquent suffered a terrible humiliation, and the exemplary effect on the rest of the class continued for years afterwards.

Today, of course, it's a widespread belief that there is no economic justice, that greed pays off and is never punished. Even in the midst of severe recession, price increases are greeted with indifference and swallowed whole. When General Motors announced several months ago an increase in car prices of 2.5 percent, few voices protested that after the most disastrous years in the industry's history, it would be more prudent to hold the line on prices (and wages) to regain the market lost to foreign competitors. And in histories by contemporary economists, even those who admired Kennedy, the steel episode often is mentioned in almost embarrassed tones. It's as if some strange mix of politics, psychology, and paternal rage had intruded into the orderly world of economics.

But what were the results of the tough economic policies followed by Kennedy, and, for a few years, his successor, Lyndon Johnson? Walter Heller, the administration's chief economist, outlined the results when he spoke at Harvard in 1966. Consumer prices had risen just 1.3 percent a year from 1960 to 1965. Wholesale prices had risen only 2 percent in the entire five-year period, "a record no other industrial nation can match," Heller said. Meanwhile, during those years the gross national product increased $218 billion—or by one-third after inflation. Real compensation for all employees rose about 30 percent. Seven million new jobs were created, cutting unemployment from nearly 7 percent to less than 4 percent. The economic growth rate had averaged 4.5 percent, nearly double that of the previous five years; it was running at 6 percent when Heller spoke in 1966.

Business thrived as well. Corporate after-tax profits doubled during this period. And though it's often forgotten today, that era was full of similar fears that American business was losing its competitive edge in international markets, the threat then coming from the new factories and technologies, and not of the Japanese, but of the Europeans. The economy was expanding faster than it had since World War II, and inflation was almost nil. How was it done?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Crossing steel

The centerpiece of the Kennedy-Johnson strategy was a set of Wage and Price Guideposts aimed directly at the business and labor leaders who influence price decisions. The Guideposts were based on a few simple principles. Wages should increase at the same rate as the rise in national productivity. Prices of an industry's goods should fall if its productivity increased faster than the national average; they would rise in those industries where productivity growth was slower than the national average. Those for whom productivity increases were difficult to gauge—teachers, for example—should be compensated according to the overall growth in productivity.

Like Gerald Ford's and Jimmy Carter's councils on wage and price stability, Kennedy's guideposts had no legal teeth. Unlike them, they also happened to work. They worked because Kennedy was willing to use his power and authority to punish those who broke them. Nothing better illustrates that than the drama that began to unfold at 5:45 the afternoon of April 10, 1962, when Roger Blough, chairman of U.S. Steel, strode purposefully into John Kennedy's Oval Office.

Blough had reason that day to be satisfied with himself. He was a leader in a metals industry that, despite slackening demand and idle machines during the 1950s, had managed to raise its prices three times faster than other manufacturers. The steel industry and its union had played leapfrog with each other, both ending up with a bigger share of the American economic pie. "When the game was over," Heller would complain later in a memo, "steel prices had been raised 47 percent and wages 64 percent in just seven years. In those years steel was the focal point for the inflation that largely created the balance of payments problem. . . ."

As of that April afternoon in 1962, steel had gone several years without a rise in price. Now it wanted one. Blough had been clever enough to keep quiet while Kennedy was pressuring the steelworkers unions for a noninflationary settlement. He had succeeded; ten days earlier—on March 31—the union leadership signed for a 2.5 percent package composed solely of fringe benefits. (Steel wage settlements had averaged 5.3 percent from 1953 to 1961.) The last of the union locals ratified the noninflationarey contract just before Blough walked into Kennedy's office.

To Kennedy's surprise, Blough handed him a press release that had already gone out, stating that it would raise prices by $6 a ton. The president read and reread Blough's statement, then told him, "I think you have made a terrible mistake."

U.S. Steel had been joined in the increase by its main competitors: Bethlehem (number two in the industry), Republic, Youngstown, and Jones and Laughlin. Together they controlled 80 percent of the nation's steel production. Yet Kennedy, although he had no legal authority over prices, wasn't going to accept what he considered a double-cross without a fight. The night of April 11 he went on national television to denounce the willful men who had displayed "irresponsible defiance" of the public interest. "In this serious hour in our nation's history," he said, "with grave crises in Berlin and Southeast Asia. . . the American people will find it hard, as I do, to accept a situation in which a tiny handful of steel executives, whose pursuit of private power and profit exceeds their sense of public responsibility, can show such utter contempt for the interest of 185 million Americans."

Hobart Rowen, then a *Newsweek* correspondent, watched the broadcast in U.S. Steel's corporate offices and detailed the story in his book, *The Free Enterprisers*, to which I owe much of this account. Rowen relates that, as the cameras showed Kennedy leaving the stage of the State Department auditorium, a U.S. Steel official snapped off the set and said: "Well, I thought he would have viewed the situation more in sorrow than in anger."

Anger there was, but there was also much of the hard, calculating thought Kennedy is remembered for. The administration set out to divide the industry. His aides soon talked one small steel firm, Inland, into announcing it would not join the increase. They then turned their attention to Bethlehem Steel. Just two days before it announced it would follow U.S. Steel's lead, a vice president of Bethlehem had declared at a stockholders' meeting that his company would not be raising its steel prices. Suspecting antitrust violations, Kennedy aides sent FBI agents to a 4 a.m. interview with a newsman who had covered the stockholders' meeting. They wanted to know the Bethlehem official's exact words. Robert Kennedy, the attorney general, announced there would be a grand jury probe for antitrust violations.

Shortly thereafter, the Pentagon awarded a $5 million armor plate contract to the Lukens Steel Company, which had not raised prices. Bethlehem, the nation's largest ship steel pro-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ducer, missed out. By Friday, April 13, two other small firms had indicated they would not climb on the U.S. Steel bandwagon. The next day, Bethlehem capitulated, its officers saying they would rescind the price increase to remain competitive. That did it for Roger Blough. U.S. Steel caved in the same day, and the rest of the industry quickly followed.

Between Tuesday and Saturday, Kennedy had won the first battle of its kind in American history—and almost the last. From many quarters, the criticism was fierce. Republicans said Kennedy's dispatch of the FBI agents was "Gestapo tactics." Joseph Livingston, a columnist often friendly to Kennedy, wrote, "Persons who regard themselves as 'liberals' and even New Dealers had reason to resent U.S. Steel's insensitivity in raising prices. But they also have reason to recoil from the relentless use of power by the president."

In Kansas City I read about those "Gestapo tactics," and I envied the newsman who had been awakened at 4 a.m. The FBI agents gave him a better story than I got all that year. And hearing the rage against Kennedy, it occurred to me that the president had broken no law. He had merely demonstrated that his government would not do business with inflation.

Kennedy also knew something his predecessors often forgot—you can't enlist labor in the fight against inflation unless you convince workers that they won't be suckers when they make sacrifices. In a television interview in late 1962, Kennedy said: "If I had not attempted, after asking the unions to accept the noninflationary settlement, if I had not attempted to use my influence to hold their prices stable, I think the union could have rightfully felt that they had been misled. . . . It would have endangered the whole bargaining between labor and management, would have made it impossible for us to exert any influence in the future. . . I just think, looking back on it, that I would not change it at all. There is no sense in raising hell and then not being successful. . . ."

Perilous profits

The showdown with Big Steel illustrates how Kennedy's Wage and Price Guideposts grew some teeth. As a result, the years trickled past with what now seem like ridiculously tiny increases in the consumer price index: 1961, .7 percent; 1962, 1.2 percent; 1963, 1.6 percent; 1964, 1.2 percent; 1965, 1.9 percent.

The Washington Post

SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 1962

U. S. Steel Rescinds Price Increas

Bethlehem, Republic, Others Yiel

U. S. Drafts Plan for Berlin; Bars Oder-Neisse Violation

Joubaud To Die on Guillotine

Record Arms Budget Voted by House Unit

Producers Act Hailed By Kennedy

Agriculture Aide Linked To Estes Resigns Post

Anne Arundel Jury Indicts School Board

For the first few years of the Johnson administration, the guideposts worked fairly well. As James L. Cochrane, an economic historian, recounts in a recent essay on Johnson's wage and price policies, the government sat in as more than a mediator at every major contract negotiation. At times, the president himself met with negotiators and appeared on TV with them to announce a result within the guideposts, which tied wage increases to the nation's 3.2 percent annual increase in productivity. In 1965 he fought aluminum and copper price hikes by suggesting that if there was a shortage of these metals, he would sell government stockpiles on the open market. Though milder than Kennedy's blast at Big Steel, it drew similar criticism: *The New York Times* chastised Johnson for making it appear that aluminum was singled out unfairly.

Someone, however, should have noticed the extraordinary nosedive of the line of the graphs that depicted standard unit labor costs. From 1960 to 1963 those costs dropped nearly 4 percent, hinting that workers were becoming a smaller cost of production. And as corporate profits continued to surge, labor began to notice. Walter Heller passed on to Lyndon Johnson in December 1963 a memo observing that the AFL-CIO felt their members "have been good boys long enough; that labor's share of income has been slipping while the corporations have been racking up unwarranted price increases." Heller also said that Walter Reuther, head of the United Auto Workers, felt that the recent declaration by General Motors of extra stockholders' dividends equivalent to a 73-cents-an-hour wage hike was seriously compromising his own position within

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the labor movement. In 1958, for example, Reuther had told Congress that if the auto companies cut prices and derived their profits from increased sales, the UAW would curb its wage demands accordingly and seek sustenance in greater production and more jobs. But now, Heller observed, "He's tired of remaining moderate while the irresponsibles in the labor movement like [Teamsters President Jimmy] Hoffa and the building trades are pushing inflationary wage increases with impunity."

In 1966, Gardner Ackley, chairman of Johnson's Council of Economic Advisors, wrote the president that Reuther was complaining again. "The source of the problem is fantastic automobile profits," Ackley said. "In 1965 the Big Four companies earned over $3 billion after taxes. General Motors alone earned over $2 billion, or a 26 percent after-tax return on equity, a figure more reasonably associated with a newly opened gold mine. . . . If we can't pull their prices down, Reuther will go after their profits in 1967 with a huge wage demand. Workers in other industries will try to follow him, touching off a massive wage-price spiral."

The gold mine was the miracle of industrial productivity, of which the auto industry was lucky enough to be the approximate middle. Should the gold be shared, say with schoolteachers, by means of a price cut? The guideposts suggested this was the answer, as did Reuther. But the auto industry said no, and the UAW went after its own piece. And like Big Steel, the auto companies and their workers fattened themselves for slaughter in the seventies by the leaner Japanese.

The biggest blow to the guideposts came in July 1966. The Machinists union won a fat 4.9 percent settlement from five airlines who, with regulation, could easily pass the costs directly to passengers. In a letter to his membership, the union's president rejoiced that this victory "destroys all existing wage and price guidelines now in existence." As predicted, the UAW got 6 percent in its 1967 contract, nearly double the guideposts. By early 1968 construction industry settlements were averaging 7.5 percent. The Detroit-Toledo Building Trades union was demanding 30 percent a year.

The Federal Reserve responded with a credit crunch in 1966, forcing interest rates to rise. Housing starts dropped off by nearly half; the growth rate slowed from 6 percent in 1966 to 2.7 percent in 1967. In 1968 Congress passed a tax increase to cool demand even further. Prices kept going up anyway: 3.4 percent in 1966, 3 percent in 1967, 4.7 percent in 1968.

The roots of inflation

With the Kennedy-Johnson era long gone, I've often wondered about the what-ifs and the might-have-beens. Forget the wish that Kennedy had not been murdered or that Vietnam had never happened. What if Johnson had acted on the 1964 finding of his cabinet-level task force that the guideposts justified an average cut of $60 in car prices? Imagine that, instead of ignoring this advice, Johnson had faced down the industry and got his price cut, putting pressure on the automakers through the thousands of cars purchased annually by the government, not to mention the growing flood of military orders. Or what if Johnson had worked hard to redistribute the productivity gains more fairly between wages and profits? What if he had used the power of government contracts to roll back, or at least halve, increases for Hoffa's Teamsters and the building trades? What if Johnson, like Kennedy, had finally said: "There is no sense raising hell and then not being successful"?

After five years of success, the guideposts slowly came apart, not from lack of usefulness but from lack of use. As the breakup was starting, Gardner Ackley sat up after midnight on July 27, 1966, writing the president a discouraged memo. That day they had lost the guideposts battle with the Machinists union, though they were yet to discover how bad the defeat had been.

It was summer in Washington, but in his words there was the smell of falling leaves and lost opportunity—the lost chance to demonstrate that no law of nature compels us to suffer periodic inflation and the recessions that follow, with their armies of the unemployed. Perhaps naively, Ackley wrote that inflation was not a problem to be solved in the next six months or two years but in the decade. "It will have to be approached head on," he told the president. "Sometime, somewhere, we will have to find a way to convince the unions that they cannot continually push wage costs up, and to convince business that profit margins cannot continually rise.

"Maybe it can't be done. . . . Or maybe things have to get worse before they get better. But history suggests that once they get worse, the job is twice as difficult."

For me that autumnal frustration is doubled, because our politicians had already found that way. They had it in their hands—and then they let it slip away. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TIDBITS AND OUTRAGES

Coming Next: The Leveraged Pregnancy

The Research Institute of America is selling a monthly special report entitled "The 'Family Device' For Building Executive Wealth." Among the contents: "Hiring Your Own Youngsters—For A Triple Tax Break," "Lend Your Children Money; Borrow It Back and Save Taxes Two Ways," and "Big Paper Losses on Stock? Consider A Sale to Your In-Laws." The report costs $3 a month plus postage and is itself tax deductible.

Well, It's the Thought That Counts

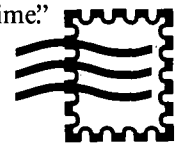
Last August, after a trip to border areas hurt by the devaluation of the Mexican peso, President Reagan set up a task force under Vice President Bush to explore ways to stimulate the local economy. The following month Bush announced $116 million in federal projects that he said would help the areas. But an investigation by the *El Paso Times* found that $94.8 million of the money was spent to underwrite private financing for oil rigs already built and in operation off the coast of Mississippi. According to a follow-up in *The New York Times*, some of the money was also spent on the development of rental property near Palm Springs, California. None of the money constituted new aid, but had already been allocated under existing programs.

The Vice President Pulled the Missing O-Ring from His Credenza and Said, 'I Knew I Forgot to Do Something This Morning'

The engines on Eastern Airlines L1011s have shut down in flight six times since September 1981 because of confusion among maintenance personnel about who was responsible for the regular replacement of oil seals ("O-rings") on engine bolts. When testifying recently before the National Transportation Safety Board, Samuel Anderson, the FAA's principal inspector for Eastern, was asked whether, in response to the engine failures, he had sent out his inspectors to observe the changing of bolts and seals firsthand. Anderson replied, "We made contact at the vice-presidential level."

'We Don't Think of It as More and More Money,' She Added, 'But as Fewer and Fewer Stamps'

Last month, on the same day that the U.S. Postal Service requested an increase in the price of a first-class stamp to 23 cents, the postmaster general revealed that he had signed a $47,000-a-month lease for a Cessna Citation 2 executive jet for the use of about ten executives in the postal service. Assistant Postmaster General Mary J. Layton explained to *The Washington Post* that the jet "is not so much to save a lot of money, or some money, but to save executive time."



Order Now! and Receive a Free Copy of 'Creative Cost Overruns'

Prentice-Hall has announced the publication of a 27-step guide called *Winning Government Contracts*. In a promotional leaflet for the book, the publisher promises that once you've mastered its techniques you'll be able "to pick up easy defense contracts for up to $10,000 *over the phone—without even having to submit a bid.*" The leaflet adds, "now government contracts are easier to get than ever before."

'Op Two, Bill Four!'

Doctors in the military reserves can count operations they perform on civilian patients as "drill time" and get paid twice, by the patient and the government.

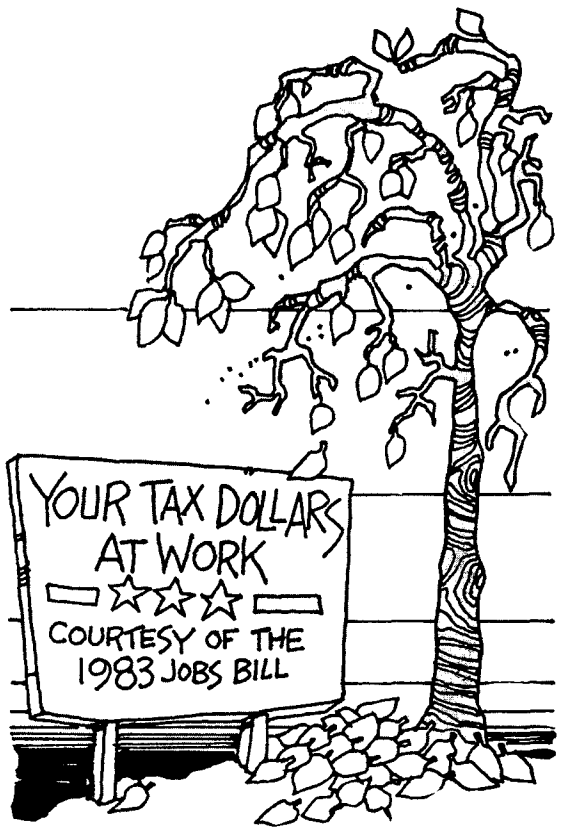
Number Two Was the Mercedes Owner's Manual

The largest-circulation periodical for doctors is a semiannual publication costing $20 a year called *Physicians' Travel and Meeting Guide*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Is the Jobs Bill Creating Jobs?

A Report from the Field



by Patricia Cohen

Remember the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1983? The act, passed this March by a Congress under heavy pressure to relieve double-digit unemployment, appropriated $4.6 billion to create an estimated 400,000 jobs. You may recall that everyone from Ronald Reagan to Tip O'Neill on the political spectrum sang its praises. Jamie Whitten, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, said he was "proud" of a bill that "put people back to work." House Minority Leader Robert Michel called it "seed money." Senator Lowell Weicker said it would get "out on the streets where it will do some good." Martin Feldstein, who chairs the President's Council of Economic Advisers, sounded like a Keynesian when he argued that, amidst the severe recession, this was a perfect time to perform some badly needed repair work on the nation's crumbling infrastructure. Reagan himself, who had vetoed a similar measure just eight weeks earlier, suddenly saw virtue in the idea, assuring the nation: "This is not just another quick fix."

How right Reagan was. Unfortunately, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act also hasn't proved much of a fix, period. The administrators in Washington who are parceling out the money won't admit this, nor will the grateful local officials who are eager to keep the federal money flowing into their coffers. A few will even be so bold as to suggest the recent dip in the unemployment rate is proof of the bill's speed and effectiveness. But anyone who's taken a closer look at how the money has actually been used will come to a wholly different conclusion. Vicki Otten, who works for Representative Paul Simon, observes, "The program has turned into a bureaucratic nightmare." A staffer for another House Democrat who voted for the bill is more blunt: "It would be virtually impossible to spend more money, and create fewer jobs, in a less timely manner, than with this bill."

Just how badly the government has bungled this program is impossible to say. Congress divided the $4.6 billion among about 60 different federal agencies and programs. Each is required to submit information to the Office of Management and Budget, but no one person, group, or agency has responsibility for where all the money is going, and how effective it's been. Interested in finding out how much of the appropriation

Patricia Cohen is a Washington, D.C., writer.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

has been spent, and the number of new jobs created so far? Even if you had time to sit down with 60 different auditors, you wouldn't be able to find out. Of the more than half-dozen officials I quizzed in Washington, none could say how many jobs had been created by their portion of the money and one—the associate director of the Illinois Washington Office—simply laughed at the question.

To understand what the jobs bill has really accomplished, you have to get out into the field, where the money is supposedly going into the pockets of desperate, unemployed workers. Baltimore is as good a place as any to examine in some detail. After Congress approved the jobs bill on March 24, the city got busy designing proposals for the $17 million it was entitled to under the bill. The proposals were presented to the City Council six weeks later, and the finalists were selected on May 22.

So then the hiring began? Hardly. Each project had to meet a variety of local and federal regulations that mandated such things as public hearings, land use compliance determinations, audits, you name it. Every project had different requirements, so for illustrative purposes let's follow a typical one—an Economic Development Administration grant to renovate a publicly owned building for use by a biomedical company. Though preliminary work had been done on the project, an architect had yet to be chosen to draw up the initial plans. After the city earmarked $1.2 million for the renovation, a public hearing on the project was held in mid-June. It was followed by meetings with business and community groups, where the details and goals for the plan were reviewed. Fortunately, there were few serious objections to the plan, and after a second meeting the final application was forwarded to the EDA in July.

Then the hiring began? Be patient. An environmental assessment came next. Again, some time was actually saved because the results showed that a full environmental impact study was unnecessary. But it took until late September for EDA to approve the application.

So *then* the hiring began? Be patient. Next, Baltimore's Board of Estimates had to accept EDA's offer, which was less than the city had originally requested. Only after that could the architect begin the real design work. Advertisements soliciting bids from local contractors could go out; originally scheduled for October 1, that didn't happen until mid-November because the architect took longer than expected to submit his design.

So when will the hiring begin? Probably not until January 1984, after the contractor is selected. In other words, not a penny of that $1.2 million in emergency assistance will have helped anyone until ten months after the bill's passage.

Other Baltimore projects illustrate several other defects in the jobs bill. For starters, the urgency that someone who's been jobless for six months feels is often not shared by the administrators who dole out the money. Mark Sissman, who oversees Baltimore's block grant money, says that the Department of Housing and Urban Development didn't even send out the forms needed to apply for the new funds until May, two months after the bill's passage.

In the case of the Small Business Administration, Baltimore's problem was not with delay, but with undue and senseless haste. During deliberations on the jobs bill, Weyerhaeuser, one of the nation's largest forest products companies, lobbied heavily to earmark $50 million to the SBA for tree-planting projects. But to qualify for a tree-planting grant, Baltimore had to have the trees *in place* by September, even though August's 100-degree heat would probably kill them. The best the city could do was to secure volunteers to do extra watering. Virginia Kearney, an administrator for the project, says they will have to "check the mortality rate next spring." So much for Robert Michel's "seed money."

Pork power

Of course, the jobs bill has not proved a complete failure. Thousands of people have been returned to productive work or given emergency food and shelter. (Nearly $1 billion of the appropriation was earmarked for such emergency, nonemployment purposes.) Nor should the act's defects suggest that the government has no business trying to put the unemployed back to work. Given the number of jobless and the staggering task of repairing the nation's decaying bridges, highways, and water systems, if anything the government should be far bolder (see Timothy Noah's "Bring Back the WPA," September 1982). But if the government is going to take the lead in fighting unemployment, the 1983 jobs bill provides a graphic illustration of how *not* to run a jobs program.

Start with the estimate that the $4.6 billion

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would create 400,000 new jobs. Admittedly, this is a small number compared to 11 million unemployed workers. But it's a start, and if those jobs were targeted to the neediest—especially the 60 percent who have no unemployment insurance or whose benefits have expired—they would relieve a great deal of suffering.

Unfortunately, the 400,000 figure itself is a bureaucratic fiction. Read the bill closely and you'll discover that most of the $4.6 billion will be used to "accelerate" the schedules of government projects already in progress. Rather than creating new jobs, this means much of the money will go to prevent the layoffs of those already working. As for the new jobs created when a highway construction contractor is told to hire a new road crew, he might conduct an exhaustive search aimed at finding the neediest workers in his area. But he might instead hire his friends—or give his existing workers a lot more overtime.

Representative Gus Hawkins, chairman of the House subcommittee on employment opportunities, estimates the jobs bill—out of the 400,000 jobs it finances—will really create only 100,000 to 200,000 *new* jobs. In other words, most of the bill's beneficiaries haven't been laid-off blue-collar workers struggling to feed their families long after their unemployment and health insurance benefits have expired. Most of the beneficiaries have been people whose biggest anxiety is the fear of losing the job they already have. They might be deserving, too—but they're hardly the people the editorial writers had in mind when they exhorted Congress last spring to pass the legislation.

Of course, 100,000 new jobs is better than nothing. Unfortunately, there's no assurance that those most in need of the work will be those hired. Those who have been unemployed for 15 weeks or longer should be given preference "to the extent possible." How hard each agency tries is, not surprisingly, up to each agency. Nor is there any provision to ensure that priority is given to those who've been unemployed so long they've exhausted their benefits, or those who live in households where no one else is working.

Most inexplicable of all, more than 60 percent of the money is given to state and local governments with absolutely no consideration of their unemployment rate. According to the National Governors Association and the National Conference of State Legislatures, North Dakota, whose 1982 unemployment rate of 5.8 percent was then one of the lowest in the country, received the second highest funding on a per capita basis. Michigan and West Virginia, two states that compete with each other for the dubious distinction of having the nation's highest unemployment, received less per capita than South Dakota, which ranked dead last in the joblessness sweepstakes.

The explanation for these differences lies, not surprisingly, in the behind-the-scene-and-in-the-cloakroom politicking that is as much a tradition on Capitol Hill as the pork barrel. In this case, the two are one and the same. In many agencies, the list of winners, by no odd coincidence, reads like a state-by-state listing of the members of the House Appropriations Committee. Take mass transit. The bulk of the $132 million appropriated by the act is divided up among the districts or states of the five members of the Appropriations Committee and a handful of other powerful congressmen such as Dan Rostenkowski and James Howard, chairman of the Public Works Committee. Over $33 million of that money went to William Lehman, the subcommittee's chairman, for bus shelters and Metrorail parking in Dade County, Florida. Jamie Whitten, chairman of the full committee, snagged a $33 million highway demonstration project for his home state of Mississippi that will supposedly demonstrate a new technique for widening roads. Representative Silvio Conte, a Republican who once donned a Miss Piggy mask for reporters as part of his long standing campaign against pork-barreling, remained silent—as did Tip O'Neill—as the state of Massachusetts got a $10 million Amtrak grant. The money will be used to subsidize a new train route across Cape Cod to Hyannisport; *The New York Times* recently reported that this route wasn't even on Amtrak's list of priorities.

If you didn't hear many congressmen complain about this process last spring, don't be surprised. A cardinal rule on Capitol Hill is that if you ever want cooperation for one of your own pet projects (worthy or no), don't criticize someone else's pet project, no matter how unworthy. Of course, some maverick legislators ignore this rule, such as Representative Robert Walker of Pennsylvania, who observed that the bill has "nothing to do with unemployment" and that projects were chosen depending on whether a representative "was in the proper place at the proper time; namely, on the [Appropriations] committee." And, as an aide says, "No one is going to give Walker five pounds of concrete unless they put it on his feet."

Speaking of concrete—there's plenty in the bill, which is another of its shortcomings. Two-thirds of the $4.6 billion is allocated for public works

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

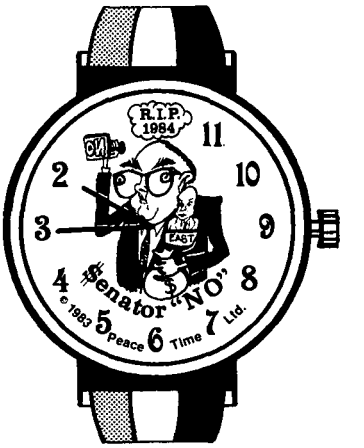
or heavy construction. There's nothing necessarily wrong with heavy construction, as anyone who's looked at the sorry condition of our roads and bridges well knows. But because public works are so capital-intensive, they don't generate many jobs. Some of the water projects funded in this bill can cost as much as $100,000 for every job created. A $5.6 million highway project in Mississippi will employ a grand total of 83 people. What's more, such projects do little to help the women and minorities who are often the *first* casualties of a recession; they make up less than 10 percent of all construction workers. Given that this was an emergency jobs measure, Congress could have given priority to labor-intensive repair work, or placed a limit on the portion of money earmarked for uses other than wages. Congress, however, had other ideas.

Write if you get work

It's not that Congress couldn't devise a jobs bill that gave the greatest help to those in greatest need when they needed it. A good model is a bill currently before Congress known as the Community Renewal Employment Act. The existence of this bill was the primary reason that a number of congressmen were persuaded to support the first piece of jobs legislation. It would appropriate $3.5 billion for new jobs, tying this assistance directly to a state's unemployment rate. To be eligible, a person must be unemployed for 15 weeks or more; first preference is given explicitly to those who've exhausted their unemployment benefits. The jobs must be labor-intensive, with no less than 75 percent of the funds used for wages; the projected cost per job is just $10,000. Finally, the bill recognizes the urgency of spending the money; work on schools, for example, must begin within 120 days of the bill's passage.

Unfortunately, the bill also stands little chance of passage. Reagan, who in taking political credit for the "jobs bill" has been noticeably unconcerned about whether the money is actually helping anyone, opposes this act. Many congressmen feel they've already voted for a jobs bill; others point to the nation's declining unemployment rate. The most potent argument against this second jobs bill is the dismal record of the first one. This is the ultimate irony of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1983: having failed to provide much of the emergency relief it promised, it has managed to make it more difficult than ever to enact a "jobs bill" that's as good as its name. ■

The Watch Is Out On Jesse Helms



In anticipation of the Greatest Political Battle in the history of this nation, Peace Time, Ltd. is releasing this collector's edition "Senator No" timepiece. The multicolored caricature of Senator Jesse Helms symbolizes his efforts to move America backwards in time and to raise huge amounts of campaign money. Senator John East, often characterized as a Helm's clone, also appears on the watch face peering from the pocket of Senator Helms. This timepiece is destined to become the most valuable political collector's item of the 1984 campaign. Developed by Peace Time, Ltd., this watch is built to withstand the rough and tumble 1984 political season. For those who wish to own a piece of history, please place your request immediately.

☎ **1-800-438-5804 TOLL FREE**

ORDERING INFORMATION
Mail Orders: **PEACE TIME, LTD.**
1 Oak Plaza, Suite 301-A, Asheville, NC 28801
Phone Orders: 1-800-438-5804
(in NC call 704-253-6772)
☐ Check ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa

Card # _____ Exp. date _____
$29.95 per watch. Add $2.00 shipping & handling per watch. North Carolina residents add 4% sales tax. (Allow 2 to 3 weeks for delivery.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WASHINGTON, DEC. 20—*The U.S. Supreme Court jolted the nation this week with its decision in* City of Pawtucket vs. Donnelly.

The First Amendment case, originally considered what former Justice John Harlan termed "a peewee," revolved around the question: Does municipal sponsorship of a publicly displayed creche (nativity scene) violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment? In recent months, the case had been the subject of much heated debate and commentary by the nation's most vigilant creche-watchers, from James Kilpatrick to Richard Cohen. And as the traditional start of the Christmas season—Thanksgiving—approached, fundamentalists, civil libertarians, and confused municipal officials pressed for a quick resolution.

Initial reaction to the decision suggests that it has pleased almost no one. The American Civil Liberties Union denounced the Court's failure to ban all public displays of creches. New Right groups, on the other hand, lambasted the Court's "display guidelines" as the most flagrant example of judicial activism since Roe vs. Wade. *One high-ranking official of the American Bar Association did, however, express pleasure that the Court's "hopelessly tangled reasoning will generate years of further litigation."*

Excerpts from the 7-to-1 decision (Marshall dissenting, Rehnquist not showing up) are printed below:

Justice Blackmun, wishing you and yours a safe and merry holiday season, delivered the opinion of the Court.

For over 40 years the City of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, has observed the Christmas season by sponsoring traditional displays, decorations, and music in four locations throughout the city.

The display at issue in this case includes a nativity scene (creche). In addition to the nativity figurines, the 1981-82 display also included:

A "talking" wishing well.

Santa's house, inhabited by a live Santa who distributed candy.

A group of caroler/musician figures in old-fashioned dress, standing on a low platform and surrounded by six artificial candles.

A small "village" composed of four houses and a church.

Three painted wooden Christmas-tree cutouts.

Four large, five-pointed stars covered with small electric lights.

A 40-foot Christmas tree strung with lights.

A team of reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh, set

Alex Heard is a Washington, D.C., ectomorph.

Goc
Ye Merry
S
and Women, a
and Jews, and Scientologists, and
C
By al

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rest
entlemen—

Blacks, and hispanics,

anians, and Eskimos, and Rastafarians, and . . .

eard

on an elevated runway.

A long garland hung from candy-striped poles.

Cutout letters, colored in fluorescent paint, that spell SEASON'S GREETINGS.

Petitioners (the City of Pawtucket) characterize Christmas as a national folk festival that derives from, but does not necessarily carry, the religious spirit of the nativity. They argue that because the creche at issue is only one symbol among many that are "neutral" in tone and content, the specifically religious significance of the creche is "neutralized" as well.

Plaintiffs (the people who are on the side that is against the City of Pawtucket) say "phooey." They insist the Establishment Clause requires government to expunge all religious content from any holiday celebrations it sponsors, and they demand that the district court injunction prohibiting the creche display, subsequently affirmed by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, be upheld. . . .

Both arguments are compelling, and for a while there this Court just didn't know *what* to do. The subsequent vicious fusillade of snowballs launched against members of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit—the first of many manifestations of a wave of mass hysteria that swept over the nation during deliberations on this case—only increased the Court's confusion.

We regret such blatant acts of political pressure, performed largely by groups who support the position that we affirm today, though our decision has nothing to do with the pressure they applied. Because there is nothing that we would like better than to take their actions into account and to make them all pretty miserable with our decision. In the words of Justice Holmes:

Oh yeah? Well I'd like to show *them* a couple of things (*Cotton vs. Knekk*, 1906).

Anyway, though the Court decided to find in favor of the petitioners, it explicitly rejects the temptation to promulgate a shoddily reasoned and simplistic declaration of legal principle.

Our decision instead is based on what journalists and other commentators will doubtless dub the "Menorah System"—a multipartite guideline for creche-display acceptability standards. This standard has as its basis a remark made in conference by Justice Powell:* "You know, I'm just not convinced that those other objects in the display serve to effectively 'neutralize' it. Now, if you put in the Smurfs, say, or even

*The Court understands that it traditionally has not quoted conference proceedings in its opinions, but why should we worry about precedent? We're the Supreme Court. We can do whatever we like.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Flintstones, that might be different. I like those Smurfs. I think they would add a more modern, commercial, and secular note."

Justice Marshall awakened and interjected: "I hate the Smurfs. I like the Cosby Kids."

There followed a lively and often acrimonious debate on the relative virtues of many American print and animation cartoon characters, all of whom for many years have provided the American people with hours of lively pleasure and fodder for good-natured debate. Among them: Mr. Magoo, The Grinch, Betty Boop, Felix the Cat, Scrooge, Mr. Mxyzptlk, Batman, Bullwinkle, Scoobie Doo, Barney Rubble, Henry, Foghorn Leghorn, The Tazmanian Devil, Fat Albert, Josie and the Pussycats, Steve Roper, Johnny Quest, Mark Trail, and Mr. Dithers. The Court agreed, however, that it could never give judicial imprimatur to such characters as Johnny Quest, Garfield, Nancy and Sluggo, any of the creatures of Mr. Berke Breathed, and Cathy (Justice O'Connor dissenting).

We know some might quarrel with our guidelines. But in a line of cases beginning with *Marbury vs. Madison* and *Martin vs. Hunter's Lessee,* extending to such cases as *Muller vs. Oregon, U.S. vs. One Man's Opinion, Marsh vs. Chambers, Mann vs. Wilderness, Committee for Public Education vs. Nyquist, Wright vs. Rong, Widmar vs. Vincent,* and *The State of North Carolina vs. North Carolina State,* the Court has established its authority to consider legal, religious, sociological, medical, political, and speculative reasons in deciding pretty much whatever it wants to, and telling the states they'd better go along. This then we do today. . . .

Our opinion takes into account the views of hundreds of disparate political and religious groups, and believe me, we heard from them all. We make these changes:

Keep "a talking wishing well." We wouldn't have one on our lawn but it's okay.

Remove "three painted wooden Christmas-tree cutouts." These are just tacky.

Remove a "40-foot Christmas tree strung with lights." This is mean to trees and discriminates against desert municipalities.

Keep "Santa's house, inhabited by a live Santa who distributes candy" and "a long garland hung from candy-striped poles," with these changes:

Add Santas of several different races and ages. *Add* a woman Santa. In addition, a portly, good-natured Santa, while a reassuring symbol of mirth and bounty, is an offensive stereotype to some. Therefore *add* ectomorphic and mesomorphic Santas.

All Santas must distribute wholesome and nutritious foods such as brown-rice cakes and nine-grain bread, *not* candy.

Garlands must be hung from representations of root or stalk vegetables (carrots, celery, etc.), *not* from "candy-striped" poles.

Remove "four large five-pointed stars covered with small white electric lights." The Court agrees that these could be viewed as an unsavory endorsement of Zionism.

Keep "a small village composed of four houses and a church." However, to comply with the Establishment Clause, *add* a synagogue, a mosque, a dianetics center, and a shopping mall.

Keep "a team of reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh" with this change: *unharness* the reindeer, allowing them to graze free and peaceful in front of the sleigh.

Remove the "group of caroler/musicians." These are corny. The Court declares that there will be made a Town Tape, to be played continuously during the Yule season. The Tape should contain samples of all types of popular music enjoyed by Americans, the categories to be defined by ASCAP. Because every artist—from Elvis Presley to Michael Jackson to Willie Nelson to The Psychedelic Furs to George Handel—have cut LPs that are appropriate for the holiday season, producing this Tape should not present a problem to municipalities.

Keep "cutout letters, colored in fluorescent paint." *Change* the message from SEASON'S GREETINGS to HEY, HAVE A HAPPY! This message is more in keeping with the age.

Keep the existing creche, but *add* five more family scenes, featuring families that are: Black, Hispanic, Asian, other, and gay. One creche should feature a Joseph who is engaged in a non-traditional male role, such as changing the swaddling of the infant Jesus.

Add three wise women to each scene.

Add representatives of the other major world religions, including Rama and Krishna, The Buddha, Confucius, Lao Tzu, Muhammed, and Moses. Inclusion of such quasi-religious figures as the Reverend Sun Myung Moon and Jerry Garcia should be dictated by local community standards.

Add the Smurfs, The Grinch, and Mr. Dithers.

With these changes, the judgment of the Court of Appeals is

Reversed

Justice Marshall dissenting.

This Court should have included the Cosby Kids.

I dissent ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Values, Personal Choice, AND THE Failure of Liberalism

Do you remember the 1980 Republican convention? Think back for a minute and you'll recall that there was a five-word mantra that recurred over and over—it was printed on the platform, repeated by speaker after speaker, even hoisted on banners. The five words were family, work, neighborhood, peace, and freedom; they were cojoined by a little-known speechwriter named William Gavin, whose obsession with bringing Republicanism out of the country clubs and into the neighborhoods is suggested by the title of his autobiography, *Street-Corner Conservative*. Here's how Ronald Reagan worked the magic words into the silver-tongued windup to his acceptance speech:

"It is impossible to capture in words the splendor of this vast continent which God has granted as His portion of creation. There are no words to express the extraordinary strength and character of this breed of people we call Americans. Everywhere we've met thousands of Democrats, independents, and Republicans from all economic conditions [and] walks of life, bound together in that community of shared values of family, work, neighborhood, peace, and freedom. . . . They are the kind of men and women Tom Paine had in mind when he wrote, during the darkest days of the American revolution, 'we have it in our power to begin the world over again.' "

Granted, that is nothing but rhetoric, albeit skillful. But with an election coming up, it becomes clearer that rhetoric has the power to change the world in politics and ought not be ignored. With that in mind, look at what Jimmy Carter said in the windup to *his* acceptance speech in 1980:

"I want teachers eager to explain what a civilization really is . . . I want women free to pursue without limit the full rights of what they want for themselves . . . I want our farmers. . . secure in the knowledge that the family farm will thrive and with a fair return on the good work they do for all of us. . . I want workers to see meaning in the labor they perform. . . I want the people in business free to pursue with boldness and freedom new ideas. . . and I want minority citizens fully to join the mainstream of American life. "

You can accuse Reagan of using high-flown phrases in a cynical and manipulative way, but you certainly can't claim any higher moral ground for that litany of gently phrased assurances to interest groups by Carter. In practical terms, isn't it obvious that one reason Reagan, and not Carter, is president today is that Reagan was willing to talk about politics in terms of personal values and Carter was not? And isn't this all the more poignant because the Carter of 1976—the victorious one—talked about values incessantly? The same man who in 1980 told the teachers and the farmers and the women's groups that he wouldn't cut their programs, four years earlier said almost exactly the opposite in his acceptance speech: "Business, labor, agriculture, education, science, and government should not struggle in isolation from one another, but should strive to mutual goals and shared opportunities."

The unwillingness of Democrats to talk about values is one of the great hidden factors in American politics today, and it is a recent enough

Nicholas Lemann is national correspondent for The Atlantic *and a contributing editor of* The Washington Monthly.

BY NICHOLAS LEMANN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

development (look at Carter's complete change in four years) to be reversible. The unwillingness does not pertain to government policy: liberals are still comfortable talking about human rights and compassion as guiding principles for the state, while conservatives aren't. Where liberals stop is at the point when the question becomes personal values. God, the main point of reference throughout Carter's 1976 campaign, was not once mentioned in his 1980 acceptance speech, whereas Reagan ended his speech with a corny moment of silent prayer that brought down the house. When Carter spoke to the nation in 1979 about narcissism, his poll ratings immediately shot up, but in opinion-leader circles, he was a big loser, with the established figures of his own party leading the catcalls against him. His well-intentioned conference on the family turned into a festival of relativism under whose guidelines even a fraternity house officially qualified as a family.

There are some good reasons for Democrats' discomfort with subjects like families, religion, and patriotism. Under those banners has paraded a lot of arrogance and exclusion over the years—those who didn't fit the program were often simply written off. Probably a majority of registered Democrats are people who at one time or another found themselves left out under the current definition of American values. And it is not just snippy to point out, as Saul Friedman of the Knight-Ridder newspapers recently did, that Democrats like Carter, Walter Mondale, and John Glenn may not talk about values but have close families, while the less-bashful Reagan has two grandchildren, one of whom he has laid eyes on once, the other never.

Nonetheless, voters do demonstrably care about personal values and want to hear politicians talk about them, and they're right to do so. There are two levels on which one can connect to national politics. One is what's in it for me, and the other is what's best for the country. Politicians operating on the first level must make practical assurances to their constituents—I'm not going to take your goodies away—and they must avoid speaking in broad terms because it might threaten somebody. Say "families" and you may anger gays; say "work" and you might look antiwelfare. So the political compact becomes a purely utilitarian one, in which politicians are not trying to establish a connection to what voters feel is best in themselves. That's why talk of values is so effective. It implies a larger cause, it has the ring of belief, and, when used uncynically, it sets the stage for a government that can call on its constituents to sacrifice individually for the sake of a clear, greater good. A rhetoric of self-interest, even if it produces victory, horribly ties a politician's hands later on.

But to be able to talk about a core of values that override self-interest and have people believe you, you have to speak with the persuasive power that comes from real conviction and commitment. Here we come to the less noble reason liberals don't like to talk about values: in recent years there has begun to appear a gulf, or more precisely a nonrelationship, between their political beliefs and their personal values.

There was a broad liberal agenda in place by the 1940s, which by, say, 1975 had been substantially achieved. During the forties, fifties, and early sixties, the rhetoric of liberalism was full of references to personal sacrifice, to putting yourself on the line. It was common to ask, as, most famously, John F. Kennedy did at his inauguration, what you were going to do in service of what you believed; the implication was that Republicans never thought about such things. That such questions were seriously asked and seriously answered gave liberalism a moral force. It gave liberals an ability in their best moments to speak with the conviction and authority that people have when they have decided not only what they think, but also how they are prepared to live as a result. It made people listen to them and take them seriously.

Over the years, as the great battles of Medicare and civil rights and food stamps and aid to higher education were won, as liberal judges came to dominate the federal courts and as liberals got effective control of both houses of Congress, what had started as causes became institutions. As a result, the culture of liberalism changed radically. The need for an ethos of personal sacrifice and commitment—join the Peace Corps, go down for Freedom Summer—lessened because now one could combine devotion to liberal goals with a prosperous career. Or, since the agenda had been achieved, one could pursue a career that was value-free without having to worry about the state of liberal goals—they were safe now.

This new liberal culture was a fat target for the right, which during the 1970s with great glee painted an extremely vivid and popular portrait of liberals as affluent, unpatriotic Washington provincials. Liberals, meanwhile, were put in the position of being the defenders of the status quo, and this gave rise to several bad habits. They came to trust courts and regulatory agencies more than

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they trusted electoral politics. Knowing that their power was built in part on an intricate series of deals, they became reluctant to engage in hard thought about the standard liberal set of positions—if some of them were wrong, there was no passion to find out about it, because now there was so much to lose. They lost their eagerness for first-hand experience in the areas of poverty and prejudice that were at the heart of their concerns. So it became more and more difficult for liberals to speak at the level of deep conviction and hone truth. They didn't want to live the lie that would have made that possible. And because they were unwilling, they couldn't very well ask the voters to sacrifice, either—even if they did ask, it would have a hollow ring. They had to approach politics fundamentally on the level of personal self-interest.

Day carelessness

A good example is liberals' attitude toward day care, one of a hundred specific issues whose political treatment is really a product of the broad values of the society. There really are two reasons for day-care centers. The first is that many poor children need a place to go during the day. In most really poor families there is no father, and mothers need day care so that they can earn the household's keep.

The second reason is one of personal fulfillment: the old convention that women must stay home with their children produced many lives of boredom, frustration, bitterness, and wasted talent. Day-care centers let women lead more interesting lives. In upper-middle-class households, day care also effectively brings in a second income that makes a nice difference—it makes possible a larger home, or a foreign vacation, or regular meals out.

For both reasons, day care seems like a great good cause, so much so that back in the mid-seventies, before liberals worried about the federal deficit, Walter Mondale proposed a vast federal program to fund day-care centers that some estimated would cost $20 billion. It didn't pass, but during the seventies day-care centers proliferated, serving a mostly working-class and middle-class constituency. Many of these centers are pretty grim places. They pay their employees the minimum wage and therefore are usually staffed by uneducated women who drift quickly from job to job. Even assuming good standards of cleanliness, which are far from universal, most day-care centers are crowded holding pens for kids. There is little teaching, activity, or loving care, and many kids are naturally miserable. In other words, we need day-care centers, but they ought to be better than they are.

One reason they aren't better is that liberals, the friends of day care, don't want word to get out of how bad they are, so it's generally assumed that they are wonderful places and that there's no reason for reform. Perhaps you've noticed that articles about day care, in practice as opposed to in theory, are not a staple of newspapers and magazines. Those few that are published usually draw swift and strong attack. Last year, *Texas Monthly* ran an account of life in a day-care center, based on weeks of firsthand observation; soon the editor of *Working Woman* magazine had embarked on a nationwide publicity tour to denounce the article for saying, in her words, "women, stay home!," which it didn't say. But her tour drew adoring notices.

You'd think liberals would be desperate to have bad conditions in day-care centers for the poor exposed—why don't they want the word to get out? Here the connection between personal commitment and political stance stands out sharply. Liberal opinion-makers, whose kids are usually either at home with a full-time maid or at that classy day-care center staffed by grad students at the university, don't want to face what is for them the really uncomfortable truth about day care, which is that what's good for the parents isn't necessarily good for the children. For those for whom day care isn't a necessity, often the right thing is for parents to temporarily sacrifice some money and prestige in order to give their children a great deal of one-on-one attention during infancy. Why? Because constant, loving attention is balm for kids, and day care almost never provides it.

To look hard at what goes wrong at day-care centers is, inevitably, to raise that uncomfortable issue. Liberals would rather not have it raised, and so would rather not have day-care centers looked at hard. And kids from the lower end of the economic spectrum who are in bad day-care centers suffer.

Liberals ought to be talking about day care and a host of other uncomfortable issues on which they are largely silent: the coming bankruptcy of the Social Security system, the huge rise in female-headed families, and on and on. The first step toward being able to do that is a willingness to walk the harder path in your own life. Live by your values, and it doesn't seem so silly to inject values back into political talk. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Why Paul Fussell Thinks He's Better Than You

by James Fallows

The jokes in *Hustler* magazine are usually at the expense of black people. Black men are lured into traps with watermelon as bait. They resemble apes in the zoo. They give white women the business with their stupendous sexual tools. And so on.

Larry Flynt has tried to laugh it all away by saying that, contrary to appearances, he is actually making fun of racial stereotypes and building goodwill. He says that the jokes are in the same affectionate spirit as two blacks calling each other "nigger." I doubt that even Flynt can believe this. What his magazine in fact dishes out is brutal, racist hatred, a hundred times more offensive than anything that Earl Butz or James Watt ever said in public and considerably worse than what *Hustler* does to its female models, who presumably participate voluntarily.

Paul Fussell, who has more in common with Flynt than was previously apparent, would probably also say that he is making fun of class stereotypes by writing a book about them that is, according to his publisher, "deeply ironic," rich with "iconoclastic wit. . . sometimes acid, sometimes affectionate." You can hear him telling his academic colleagues that only earthbound morons could possibly take the book for what it seems to be: one long, mean-spirited sneer.

Far from being "fun" or "ironic," *Class** is in fact a contemptible piece of work, reeking of the very attitudes it means to mock, a shameful misuse of Fussell's great talents. My animus against this book does not arise from the source Fussell suggests in his introductory section: the discomfort many Americans feel with the very notion of "class." Indeed, I have invested much of my time in the last few years trying to understand the same subject. Nor, as that might indicate, are my views twisted by professional jealousy. Fussell has been, until now, one of the handful of writers I most admire. His finest book, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, which won the National Book Award in 1976, will endure. I began *Class* with high hopes.

It is precisely Fussell's stature that makes the book such a shock. From the creators of the *Official Preppy Handbook* or the assorted "dress (eat/buy/pray) for success" tomes, lectures about the ugliness of Montgomery Ward clothing and of mobile homes are just what we'd expect. But not from Paul Fussell—not from the man who, in *The Great War* and in his *New Republic* article about dropping the bomb on Hiroshima (he was for it, because of the infantrymen's lives it saved) explored the soul of the men who, when out of uniform, would be wearing those inelegant suits and living in those tacky trailers. This is not quite the same collapse as William Faulkner's writing drivel for the "Lux Video Theater," but it's in the ballpark. The Lux stage in Faulkner's career tells us something about the distortions imposed on artists' lives by the need to make a living. The *Class* stage of Fussell's may tell us more about class than the text of his book.

Taken at face value, Fussell's book is a taxonomy of the nine different classes of American society, defined mainly by their tastes. He makes the "deeply ironic" suggestion that the "Top out of sight" and the "Bottom out of sight" classes display a "curious similarity, if not actual brotherhood." You don't think so? Well, consider this: "Just as the tops are hidden away on their islands or behind the peek-a-boo walls of their estates, the bottoms are equally invisible; when not put away in institutions or claustrated in monasteries, lamaseries, or communes, then

James Fallows is Washington editor of The Atlantic *and a contributing editor of* The Washington Monthly.

**Class: A Guide Through the American Status System*, Paul Fussell, Summit Books, $13.95.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Illustrations by Martin de Avilez. From "Class: A Guide Through the American Status System"

"Your weight is an advertisement of your social standing."

hiding from creditors, deceived bail bondsmen, and gulled merchants intent on repossessing cars and furniture. . . . And a further similarity: members of both classes carry very little cash on their persons." This is a fair specimen of the book's "iconoclastic wit."

But Fussell pays only cursory attention to the extremes; his real quarry is the vast "middle" and "working" classes, the difficult-to-define swath that excludes only the chronically unemployed at one end and those with inherited wealth at the other. Each gradation within this range suffers its own fallibility, in Fussell's view: the upper-middles are driven and lack the self-confident freedom of the true uppers; the middle live in meek terror of putting a foot wrong; and as for everyone else, whom Fussell consistently refers to as proles, they are fat, ugly, unlearned, uninteresting, and usually dressed in poor taste.

For example: "The prole either has his jaw set in bitterness and defiance or his mouth open in doltish wonder." (This is accompanied by a nice pair of drawings, one showing the over-bred, slightly equine profile of an "upper middle," the other the swinish features of a "prole.") "It's the three prole classes that get fat; fast food and beer are two of the causes, but anxiety about slipping down a rung, resulting in nervous overeating, plays its part too, especially among high proles." (This one has a drawing of a prole couple, she with hair in curlers and thighs bursting out of checkered polyester pants, he with no neck, a gaping mouth, and an untucked shirt in an American flag motif.) "Proles take to visor caps instinctively, which accounts for the vast popularity among them of what we must simply call the prole cap. . . . Regardless of the precise style of the prole cap, it seems crucial that it be ugly." "If the upper orders have yachts, what do the proles have? Bowling. . . . It's one sport you don't have to strip down to play; you can be good at it and still keep your prole fatty tissue decently covered."

What's even funnier about the lower and middle ranks is that *they don't know how pathetic they are*. They try to overreach by using big words, but their blunders reveal their ignorance: "Proles signal their identity partly by pronunciation, like the Texan on the [William F.] Buckley show who said *pro-mis-kitty* and 'I am a prole' at the same time. . . . Another prole problem is difficulty with the complex sentence, resulting in structures displaying elaborate pseudo-correct participles like 'being that it was a cold day, the furnace was on.' "

The high proles and the middles may try to dignify their "mean little houses" with brass eagles and other classy ornamentation, but they only trumpet their insecurity in making the attempt. Try as they might, they can't conceal their vulgar tastes and habits—even their pretensions to culture give them away. ("Are you sent to an extraordinary degree by the cuckoo in Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*? Then you're middle class.") The striving middle orders think they are dignifying themselves by acquiring collections of functionless items—beer mugs, porcelain thimbles. Fussell asks the reader to imagine himself face-to-face with the results of such pitiable behavior: "You realize with a start that this country must be swarming with middle-class novelty-thimble collectors. And this sweet lady who's showing you her collection thinks not merely that it's interesting; she thinks it's valuable, and that's the awful thing.

"I feel very sorry for this woman."

Why did he do it? What could have made a serious author write 200 pages of this sort of thing?

One possibility is that Fussell just made a big but innocent mistake. He may have thought it was all in good fun and not have realized that he sounds like a complacent jerk sneering at proles and reading them out of consideration as fully-human beings.

This hypothesis is supported by the overall shoddiness of the book, considered simply as a work of literary craftsmanship. Most of Fussell's "evidence" consists of quotes from the standard class-in-America reading list, which runs from Thorstein Veblen and C. Wright Mills to Andrew Levinson and Paul Blumberg. The rest comes

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from TV shows he's watched, items he's clipped from the *National Enquirer* (the easiest way to do cross-class reporting), or things that caught his eye while he was making his round in town. There is no "research," in the normal sense of the term, in the book, nor any indication that Fussell interviewed a single person to develop or check his views. When the upper class speaks in his book, it is through quotes from Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney's memoirs. When the proles speak, it is from—who knows where, since the book contains not one citation or reference note.

Having put so little effort into gathering material, Fussell naturally makes sloppy, easily avoidable mistakes. Trying to conjure up a vision of proledom, and to suggest how little a college degree means when even the proles can get one, Fussell hypothesizes a pickup truck with a three-rifle rack in the rear window and a Southern Methodist University sticker on the bumper. But SMU, of course, is Texas's answer to Princeton, and the sticker would be more natural on a Dallas stockbroker's Cadillac or big Buick in Highland Park. Similarly, to support his theme that the Sunbelt as a whole is unacceptable to the upper class, Fussell says: "It's not considered good form to live in New Jersey, except in Bernardsville and perhaps Princeton, but any place in New Jersey beats Sunnyvale, Cypress, and Compton, California." What's wrong here? The three towns in California, which Fussell apparently finds indistinguishable, could hardly be more different. Compton is a hard-bitten, mainly black, industrial portion of Los Angeles, while Sunnyvale is the high-rent heart of the Silicon Valley, and Cypress is a standard suburb in Orange County.

I know, even to argue about his classifications is to play Fussell's own game. My point is not to debate Fussell about where SMU or Sunnyvale should be ranked but to illustrate how little he cares about getting things right. Daily life has apparently taught him about Bernardsville, so he drops in that accurate allusion; for the list of California cities, he seems to have been content to work from a map.

A still stronger piece of evidence for the hypothesis that *Class* is just a gigantic miscalculation is Fussell's final chapter, on the people in "Category X."

Happily enough for such people, they alone are free of the pains of class. They do what they like, without fear of being thought either uncouth or stuck-up. Their sublimely refined taste guides them to the truly fine things in life. They dress to please themselves; indeed, that is how they live.

U.S. Army scene: a senior officer's wife (note pseudo-upper-middle-class getup) pours coffee into cups of subordinates' wives

They are not fat. But why should I try to paraphrase? Fussell makes it so much more vivid himself:

"When an X person, male or female, meets a member of an identifiable class, the costume, no matter what it is, conveys the message 'I am freer and less terrified than you are,' or—in extreme circumstances—'I am more intelligent and interesting than you are; please do not bore me.' . . .

"The places where X people choose to live usually have a decent delicatessen or good wine store. . . . Regardless of the style of the cuisine, X food is always 1) good, and 2) unpraised by the company, its excellence taken for granted. . . .

"Instinctively unprovincial, X people tend to be unostentatiously familiar with the street layouts and landmarks of London, Paris, and Rome—and sometimes Istanbul and Karachi. This is in accord with their habit of knowing a lot for the pleasure of it. . . . The X reader reads everything, his curiosity being without limit. On occasion he will even read best-sellers, but largely to see if their cliche content is as high as usual. . . .

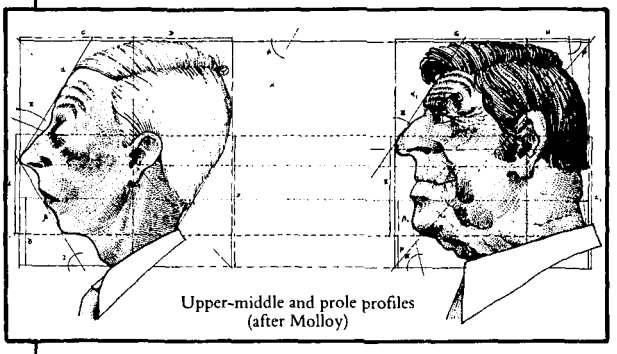
"They're good at languages. . . . Instead of the occasional dress-up foreign word of the middle and upper-middle classes (gourmet, arrivederci, kaput) Xs can deliver whole paragraphs in French, Italian, German, or Spanish, and sometimes Russian or Chinese as well."

There is much, much more, all in the same vein. Mr. Fussell, when not writing, teaches English at the University of Pennsylvania, and his vision of the X people bears great resemblance to the vision many college professors have always

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had of themselves and their class. The professors' yearning for a meritocracy of taste is entirely natural: They do not make as much money as others with comparable education, such as doctors or lawyers, and they do not have political power. What they have is a command of refined distinctions—how they do it in Karachi, how they say it in Madrid. (Journalists used to display a milder version of the same trait, before their status revolution of the last generation left them with bigger salaries.)

Fussell's vision of the X people also bears great resemblance to the way Fussell apparently thinks of himself. He takes no critical distance from the wondrous X-style he is describing. Here his fabled irony is nowhere to be found. He ends the X chapter—and the book—with a hint that others might someday share the freedom he and other



Upper-middle and prole profiles (after Molloy)

Xs enjoy: "The society of Xs is not large at the moment. It could be larger, for many can join who've not yet understood that they have received an invitation."

This conclusion has all the graciousness and dignity of a Mensa official's encouraging his friends to apply because—who knows?—they just might be able to qualify. Perhaps I am not doing Fussell justice; he may have thought that Category X was such a broad and obvious joke no one would take it seriously. But if his last chapter is not a parody—if it is as totally lacking in self-awareness as it seems—then its very clumsiness is the strongest evidence that Fussell's book is merely misconceived, rather than cynical. If Fussell truly thought himself part of the aristocracy of taste, free of the status anxieties that hamper everyone else, then why not share his blunt, "ironic" views about the proles? After all, he has told us that one sign of the Xs' freedom is their eagerness to "eschew euphemism" and tell it straight.

The other possibility is that Paul Fussell understood exactly how this book would look and sound, and went ahead anyway. The evidence, I fear, points to this conclusion.

One indication is Fussell's determination to omit any mention of race—more precisely, to speak only of class division among white Americans. Perhaps the most important contemporary class difference is that within black America. Many blacks are doing better than ever before, but many others—a growing proportion—are doing worse. The overall rate of illegitimate births and teenage pregnancies is rising among blacks—even as those black families that stay intact enjoy dramatically higher incomes than ten years ago. Some of the opposition to school busing plans arose from simple racism, but more of it concerns class: class tensions between the judges who lived in Wellesley and the students who lived in South Boston, as well as fears about the underclass black culture of violence and disruption.

How could Fussell have left out race altogether? His explanation is that he has stuck to those class traits "that reflect choice." More fatuous words have rarely been written. Except when describing the sainted Xs, Fussell mainly talks about traits that reflect "choice" less than circumstance: accent, level of schooling, family connections, physiognomy.

Perhaps Fussell omitted the blacks because it would have meant actual research, of the sort he has otherwise avoided. But I suspect the real reason is that he understood he would get into trouble. Following the logic of his "prole" portrayals, he would have to start talking about thick-lipped, kinky-haired "niggers" and randy "bucks." Fussell was shrewd enough to realize he could not get away with this when talking about blacks—but could safely use vicious stereotypes about working-class whites.

A second indication of Fussell's cynicism is his whole history as a writer. His most powerful and eloquent writing has been about warfare and the military, and some of his most affecting passages concern the class identities and anxieties that soldiers bring with them to battle. The gulf between the gentlemen-officers and the working-class Tommies of the British army was the subtext of *The Great War*. In his article about Hiroshima, he said that infantry soldiers—of which he was one—cheered when they heard that the bomb had been dropped. The bomb killed 100,000 people, mainly civilians; it probably saved the one million lives, Japanese and American alike, that would have been lost in a D-Day style invasion of Japan. The moral agonizing, he said, came from genteel

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

civilian strategists, thousands of miles from the war zone, who ran no risk of being killed in an invasion of Japan. Could the man who described those feelings not know how repugnant it would be to write about fat, ugly proles?

Significantly, the one book from the class-in-America canon from which Fussell does not quote or cite is Richard Sennett's and Jonathan Cobb's brilliant *The Hidden Injuries of Class*. That book, published nearly ten years ago, drew on a painstaking, subtle effort to understand how people really felt about their class position in life. In contrast to Fussell's impervious proles, too obtuse to notice what they're missing, Sennett and Cobb portrayed a never-ending struggle in which "proles" attempt to measure up to the wider world's standards of success and mercilessly hold themselves accountable when they fail.

The clinching evidence against Fussell occupies a mere eight lines near the beginning of the book, lines entirely out of character with everything that follows. They are:

"Probably the most awful class division in America, one that cuts deeply across the center of society and that will poison life here for generations, is the one separating those whose young people were killed or savaged in the Vietnam war and those who, thanks largely to the infamous S-2 deferment for college students, escaped. Anyone uncertain about class consciousness in this country should listen to a working-class father whose son was killed."

Fussell is right, of course; but the true importance of this passage is what it reveals about the author. It proves that *he knows*. He knows that class differences are not simply a matter of having a tractor-tire planter in your front yard versus having a curved driveway. They affect the way we make our public choices, do our business, fight our wars. They affect the adaptability of our economy, our ability to pay our way. They can make one business more resilient than another. Their bitter intensity contributed to the downfall of Detroit and Youngstown, and their comparative absence is part of the explanation for the economic boom in the Southwest.

Fussell also knows something more important, something worse. He knows that the very attitudes he will go on to promulgate in the rest of the book helped create the tragedy he describes. *If those proles are so dumb and ugly, why not let them go get shot?*

Paul Fussell knew these things, and still he produced this book. Is the explanation merely economic—the hope of big sales? Who can say? In any case, he presumably could have still earned money with a respectable book, even one on this very theme, which he has been writing around for at least the last ten years. He could have explored our obsession with social gradations, instead of pandering to it.

He did not do those things, and that is the final evil of his book. Differences of taste and style exist, as they always have. As Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb demonstrated, they deserve the most careful study. While their book differs from Fussell's in its higher craftsmanship, the more fundamental difference is the authors' intention. Sennett and Cobb immersed themselves in a study of class and status differences in order to understand how to blunt their destructive psychological and economic effects. Paul Fussell could have done the same thing—he has done versions of it in his previous works. But this time, he used his intellect and erudition not for understanding, but for aggression. *Class* is a cruel book, meant to inflict new wounds and open old ones. Above all, it is designed to place its author at the top of the heap.

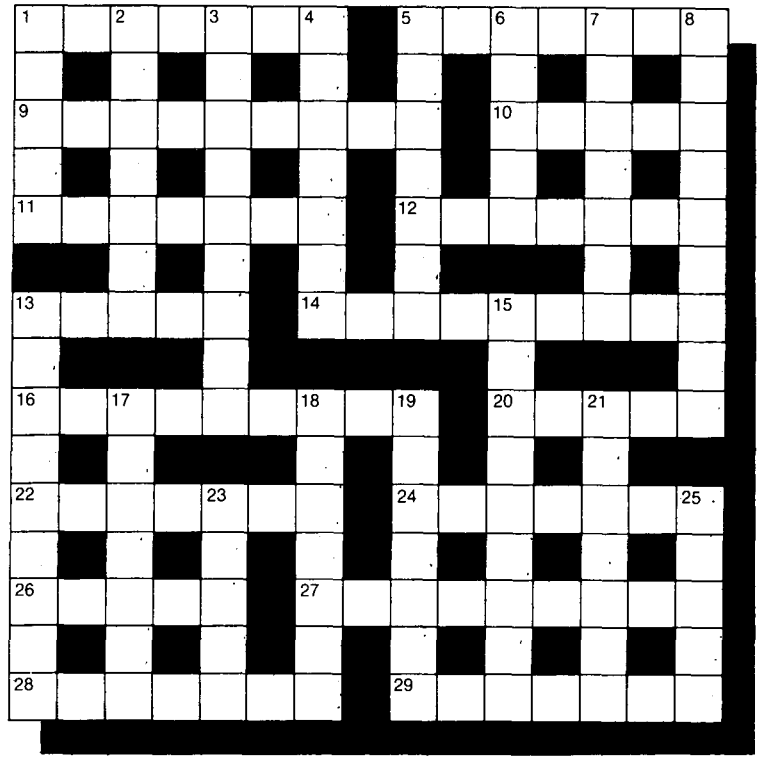
This last comment may seem like a disingenuous sermonette: why would anyone write except to display his talents to their best advantage? (I, for example, hope your reaction on finishing this piece is not, "This guy is a dope.") And in calling Fussell a snob, I realize that I run the risk of seeming like a bigger one.

But remember Sennett and Cobb. They are every bit as smart as Fussell. But to compare the two books is to see two fundamentally different uses to which intelligence can be put. Sennett and Cobb employed their profound understanding, not to sneer at other people's inadequacies as Fussell has done, but to point readers toward an understanding that less insightful people might not have found.

I am not suggesting that every word published between every set of covers need have a redeeming social purpose. But when a formidable mind wrestles with a crucially important topic, the reader expects more than a sleazy tag-team match. Paul Fussell could have helped us understand how our sense of class limits us, as individuals and as a society. Such are his powers that he might even have been able to suggest alternate ways to conceive of "success" and "class." He could have helped still that tense inner voice, whispering within a million brains, *How am I looking? Have I slipped up yet? How can I make the other guy slip more?* That he has instead aroused those fears is our loss, and his shame. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POLITICAL PUZZLE



by John Barclay

The numbers indicate the number of letters and words, e.g., (2,3) means a two-letter word followed by a three-letter word. Groups of letters, e.g., USA, are treated as one word.

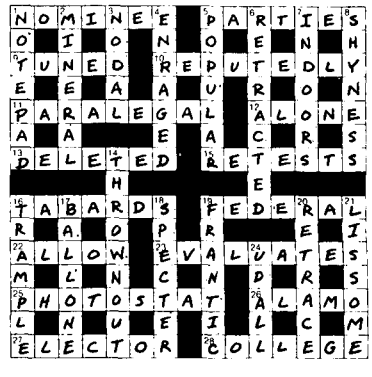
ACROSS

1. A danger set up for Reagan. (7)
5. Catch Christmas around back for Reagan's chosen field. (7)
9. Crop pests disturbed potential customers. (9)
10. Artsy sort of imaginary creature. (5)
11. Re: tears flowing. Cut teeth. (7)
12. Good riddance on a date? (3,4)
13. Alexander and John, for example. (5)
14. Most dependable managed stateside. (9)
16. For the last time shake up remover in New England. (9)
20. Command brothers? (5)
22. Let loose United Nation sections on the way back. (5)
24. Forbidden to be sick around a hind leg. (7)
26. J. Paul Getty found outside the pier. (5)
27. Wee pause, we hear, for one of the angels. (9)
28. Advance contingent for Reagan conducted seminar. (7)
29. Erudite one contemplates scar around whole in the middle. (7)

DOWN

1. Looks at riffled pages. (5)
2. Devotion to personal goal makes it grope. (3,4)
3. Commendation in April for tax official. (9)
4. Her scar upset Robin Hood's men. (7)
5. The ultimate in crazy lean-tos. (4,3)
6. Attack the greatest in the East. (5)
7. Evening service we hear for salt. (7)
8. Start horn blowing for Polaris. (5,4)
13. Far East peace site makes no man jump. (9)
15. Shake chord a lot for entry control. (4,5)
17. Stranger hat part around it. (7)
18. Is against 13 Across so displayed. (7)
19. Paper bosses tried so awkwardly. (7)
21. Computer thinking laid up around soldier's tea. (7)
23. Synthetic or any mixture. (5)
25. Up or down may keep people at a distance. (5)

Answers to last month's puzzle:



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

South Vietnam: The Puppet as Puppeteer

by Jonathan Alter

It's now exactly 20 years since Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother Nhu were found murdered in the back of an armored car. Of the dozens of decisive moments in the history of the Vietnam war, the Diem coup and the chaos in Saigon that immediately followed are beginning to look especially significant. Suddenly in late 1963 John F. Kennedy's public comment the previous summer that "it's their war [South Vietnam's] to win or lose" no longer applied. The meetings at a Saigon dentist's office between the CIA's Lucien Conein and coup plotters had taken care of that. William Bundy, of all people, later came up with the right analogy for what the whole episode meant. He compared American complicity in the coup to "the parent who speaks up at PTA to oust an incompetent chairman; he or she cannot complain if the result is a job on the selection committee or in the end as the new chairman."

Stanley Karnow, most recently chief correspondent for PBS's fine 13-part documentary on Vietnam, began reporting on Indochina in the early 1950s and has skillfully covered it off and on ever since. His useful narrative of this futile war* contains quite a bit of retrospectively revealing information, particularly for antiwar liberals. In 1981, Karnow was invited to Vietnam for seven weeks, longer than any Western correspondent since the end of the war. He found that, contrary to the anguished cries of antiwar activists, the so-called "carpet bombing" of Hanoi in 1972 left less destruction than generally believed. (Hanoi can't have rebuilt the destroyed buildings in the time since; it had no money.) Karnow also found that the CIA's notorious Phoenix program, for all its brutality, was far more effective than he had once believed in neutralizing the influence of the National Liberation Front. Several Communist officials told him that the program came very close to succeeding in its objective of rooting out the Vietcong infrastructure. Most interesting of all, in the context of the critical 1963-1965 period, Karnow found that—surprise, surprise—that laughable State Department white paper had been right after all: the North Vietnamese were in fact infiltrating troops into the South *before* U.S. escalation. We hadn't intervened in a civil war in the South, as so many were to claim. Karnow has this directly from the mouths of the North Vietnamese who widened the Ho Chi Minh trail.

This last detail is especially relevant because it confirms that the large-scale American commitment really did come in response to some very specific local events in Vietnam. That may seem self-evident, but it has always been—wrongly, it seems to me—subordinated to a more global explanation of the intervention. Nixon may have been right: the U.S. did become a helpless, pitiful giant. But not in the way he thought. It wasn't that the big, strong United States looked weak to our allies, but that the big, strong United States was, in the wake of the Diem coup, led around on a leash by its own client state—or, more accurately, by the developments in its client state, South Vietnam.

Karnow understands the importance of Diem's demise as a "fresh phase in the conflict." But the chapter he devotes to it only partly conveys the more complex dynamic that accounted for the "Americanization" of the war. Looking back, the essential change that took place in Vietnam during 1963 and 1964 was from a "political" commitment to a conventional military one. Up to the Diem coup, the U.S. placed most of its emphasis on politically strengthening the Saigon regime—through counterinsurgency training, a futile "strategic hamlet" program, and the use of aid reductions to try to affect the behavior of Diem and his brother. After the coup, with revolving-door governments and a weakening of

Jonathan Alter is an associate editor of Newsweek *and a contributing editor of* The Washington Monthly.

**Vietnam: A History*, Stanley Karnow, *Viking, $20.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the war effort, those advocating a strictly military approach won the upper hand in Washington, and bombing and ground troops followed. The shift was not total: within a couple of years the U.S. would push for elections and launch "pacification" programs. But by that time, with the presence of hundreds of thousands of American troops, any chance of a political view dominating had long since disappeared.

The shift in approach is most commonly explained at the highest level: Kennedy was assassinated three weeks after Diem, and the political response died with him. As vice president, Lyndon Johnson had supported Diem to the end—opposing what he called the "cops and robbers stuff" associated with the coup planning—and the minute he took over, Averell Harriman, Roger Hilsman, Michael Forrestal, Paul Kattenburg, and others who had agitated against Diem were finished as Vietnam policy-makers. It's hard to remember, but the people who most wanted the CIA to help topple Diem were *liberals* who thought the war effort was going badly.

Henry Cabot Lodge sizes up Ngo Dinh Diem.

Photo by Larry Burrows, Life magazine © Time Inc.

The demise of the so-called "Harriman Group" (the governor himself was transferred to African affairs), was highly ironic: having pierced the too-rosy military prognosis in the summer of 1963, these advocates of a political approach became victims of their own accurate assessments. After the coup, previously Pollyannish hardliners suddenly embraced Harriman and company's pessimistic reporting on the war's progress—and used it as a justification for stronger conventional military measures. The liberal policy-makers who had believed all that was needed was a change in government in Saigon had been proved wrong. The clownish coups and clumsy war effort that followed the decision to disassociate from Diem thoroughly discredited the political approach.

Recall that one of the most frequently asked questions in the years that followed—"What were we doing there in the first place?"—simply wasn't asked then. Getting out just wasn't an option: Bobby Kennedy raised the issue half facetiously in the fall of 1963 and it was quickly laughed off. All the same, the reason we stayed underwent a subtle transformation in this critical period—a change that would determine the entire future of the commitment. What for Eisenhower and Kennedy began as a country in which large global ideas (containing Chinese communism, maintaining "credibility" with allies) dictated American interest in local Vietnamese circumstances, became for Johnson a country in which local circumstances tested the strength of larger global ideas. In other words, a policy determined by ideas became a policy determined by events. The idealism and ideology were still there, all right, particularly in the speechifying, but once we took responsibility for South Vietnam—once it became our baby, as the policy-makers like to call it—the power to affect the commitment really rested with the South Vietnamese. With the precedent of American involvement in the Diem coup, every time Saigon neared collapse, the U.S. had to step in further. Because political dickering had proved so unsuccessful, and total withdrawal was still so unthinkable (even to on-scene skeptics like David Halberstam), that meant escalation.

Interestingly enough, the peculiar logic of all this did not originate with Vietnam. A.J.P. Taylor, writing about Europe, stated it in its purest form: "When one state is completely dependent on another, it is the weaker that calls the tune; it can threaten to collapse unless supported and its pro-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tector has no answer in return." This phenomenon was one of the strange hallmarks of colonialism. Liberal, anti-imperialist Gladstone, for instance, was drawn into intervention in Egypt 100 years ago, not to occupy the country or pursue some grand new Mediterranean strategy but, as Ronald Robinson and Jack Gallagher point out, as an "involuntary response to the continued collapse of the Khedivial regime."

Could the American commitment to South Vietnam really have been involuntary? Karnow sprinkles his narrative with lots of details suggesting that the Saigon government, consciously or not, had the United States just where it wanted it—"the puppets were pulling the strings," he writes. This extended from Minh to Khanh to Ky to Thieu, plus all the others who temporarily warmed the presidential seat. It's well known that Thieu left Saigon with millions of dollars' worth of gold in 1975, and that a whole class of urban Vietnamese, including most military commanders, carved up the country into franchises for drugs, television sets, and all sorts of other riches that the American presence brought. But the United States was used in more subtle ways too. The Americans scoffed at Nguyen Khanh's calls to "Go North" with the war in 1964; still, they planned during this period to do just that—as a way of staving off collapse in the South.

A particularly good example of the way the weaker called the tune came at the end of that year. Ambassador Maxwell Taylor made the mistake of privately hectoring Khanh and other officers about the absurdly convoluted political intrigue then—as always—gripping Saigon. Khanh responded by denouncing the United States to a New York *Herald Tribune* reporter, and Taylor in turn suspended certain U.S. military and civilian programs. Once again, as under Diem, the South Vietnamese easily called the Americans' bluff. Aid was restored without changes in the behavior of the regime. One Saigon official spelled it out privately for Karnow at the time: "Our big advantage over the Americans is that they want to win the war more than we do." As time went on, this became obvious. The South Vietnamese government almost collapsed again in 1966 when another Buddhist revolt broke out in Hue, and in 1967 under the weight of staggering corruption. Until Tet in early 1968, you could almost plot on a graph the correlation between the declining effectiveness of the South Vietnamese and the growing American commitment. "Their weakness," Karnow writes, "was their strength."

Tyranny of the weak

If you think about it, the weak, whether nations or individuals, fare well against the strong in all kinds of human situations. The strong can rest on their authority, muscle, powers of intimidation, and the threat of terminating a job or relationship. But the weak can impose guilt, sulk, threaten noncooperation, withhold admiration or affection, and figure out all sorts of other ways to undermine the strong. Might not this peculiar human chemistry also help determine why Cabinet secretaries are often prisoners of their departments, bosses of their subordinates, nations of their client states, and parents of their children? Karnow often describes the relationship between Washington and Saigon as akin to that between an awkward parent and difficult child. The weaker calls the tune.

This logic practically leaps out from Lebanon. It isn't that Amin Gemayel or anyone else is consciously manipulating the United States. Instead, it's the chaos itself, the threat of collapse, that carries within it the power to keep the Americans there. Just as in Vietnam, the larger global justifications for being involved have receded into rhetorical insignificance. These larger global stakes—the Soviets, etc.—now show up more in presidential speeches but in fact have less to do with why we're committed. After the bombing of the barracks, it's local circumstances that call the tune. If we leave, the regime collapses, and those marines look as if they died in vain. In Lebanon, as in Vietnam, where Vietcong attacks on barracks at Pleiku and elsewhere helped speed escalation, this mindset had replaced whatever it was that put us there in the first place.

All of this is by way of explanation, not justification, for what the United States eventually did to Vietnam. Moreover, while the logic may have unavoidably led to some sort of American commitment, it did not unavoidably lead to 500,000 troops, brutal warfare and an inept withdrawal. Remember, too, that the inexorable logic of intervention would not have been set in motion in the first place had it not been for the new sense of responsibility felt after American complicity in the Diem coup. In Lebanon, of course, that suggests that the more actively we intervene, the harder it will be to leave. Maybe the real lesson of Vietnam is to separate those world responsibilities we assume because we want them from those imposed on us because our actions—or the actions of local enemies—have left us no choice. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cheap Seats and White Knuckles

by Robert M. Kaus

I hate to bring it up, but doesn't it seem as if an awful lot of airliners have been crashing—or coming close—the past few years? The headlines have been about the big disasters, like the plunge of that Air Florida jet into the Potomac in 1981. But smaller headlines are appearing with disconcerting frequency on page three of the paper, saying things like: PLANE LANDS SAFELY AFTER ENGINE FAILS or MIDAIR JETLINER INCIDENTS ARE INVESTIGATED. Federal Aviation Administration figures show that the number of people killed on commercial flights, which averaged less than 80 a year for three years before 1978, has averaged 150 a year since—almost double.

Don't go bandying that statistic about Washington, though. This is a touchy subject. The reason it's touchy is that date: 1978, the year Congress deregulated the airline industry. Few government initiatives have been so applauded by so many respectable people as air deregulation. Here was a rare occasion on which politicians of diverse ideological stripes actually agreed to *do* something. No one wants to think what they did may have cost dozens of lives. So FAA officials will tell you that nothing can be proved. The jury is still out. Current trends are statistically suspect.

Maybe. But the jury is rapidly coming in, and I fear the verdict will be guilty. Frederick Thayer makes the case against air deregulation in his new book, *Rebuilding America: The Case for Economic Regulation*.* Thayer has been a somewhat lonely voice over the past decade, decrying virtually all forms of deregulation, but his argument regarding air safety is so plausible as to be almost obvious. Deregulation, he notes, has created powerful incentives for airlines to meet the competition by cutting costs. But one of the costs that might be cut is the cost of air safety. This possibility was brought home recently to a friend of mine who was riding on a cut-rate People Express flight when the plane began to rattle ominously. He suddenly realized maybe they don't save all that money just by not answering their phones.

In 1979, Thayer reminds us, American Airlines decided to save some money in the inspection of the engines on its DC-10s. Instead of first removing the engine from the supporting pylon, as specified by the manufacturer, American decided to remove engine and pylon all in one piece. The pylon on a DC-10 leaving Chicago's O'Hare airport gave way, and 273 people were killed in the resulting crash. Cost-cutting was again a factor when Air Florida's jet failed to clear a bridge over the Potomac during takeoff. Seventy-eight were killed. Air Florida pilots, it turned out, had been trained to avoid using full power on takeoff in order to economize on fuel.

Thayer's gloomy prediction seemed confirmed last month when Douglas Feaver of *The Washington Post* obtained an FAA report on Republic Airlines that would be enough to give Chuck Yeager sweaty palms on the runway. Republic crews had ignored safety checklists, didn't know anti-ice procedures, and didn't communicate with each other. They also forgot to check their fuel levels, with the result that Republic jetliners twice ran out of fuel before reaching their destinations. "Several other" similar mistakes were caught just in time.

Even scarier, Republic pilots were pressured into cutting fuel costs by coasting in for landings at a steep angle, instead of taking a safer, "stabilized" approach, which uses more fuel because it requires turning the engines up to high thrust. Who did the pressuring? Why, the "checkairmen"—Republic employees who were delegated by the FAA to enforce safe procedures. Instead, they appear to have done just the opposite. Ac-

Robert M. Kaus is a speechwriter for Senator Ernest Hollings and a contributing editor of The Washington Monthly. *These views are not necessarily those of Senator Hollings.*

**Rebuilding America: The Case for Economic Regulation*, Frederick Thayer, *Praeger Publishers*, $15.95.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cording to three Republic pilots, the check-airman "would raise hell" if the pilots expended precious fuel just for a safer landing.

Back to Mussolini?

Thayer's book directly challenges a consensus on government regulation that has come to be shared by both the liberal left (e.g., Ralph Nader and Teddy Kennedy) and the nonlibertarian right (e.g., Irving Kristol and Gerald Ford). The consensus holds that "social regulation" to protect health, safety, and the like is necessary, but "economic regulation" of the sort that protected industries such as the airlines from competition is wrong. Airlines, trucks, railroads, telephones, and banks have all been freed, to one degree or another, from the latter sort of regulation over the past five years.

Now along comes Thayer and suggests that you can't have one kind of regulation without the other—that "social regulation of health and safety standards cannot be effective. . . unless it is accompanied by economic regulation." Back when the airlines were a happy cartel run by the Civil Aeronautics Board, Thayer points out, there were only a few firms, flying stable routes that their pilots knew well. They didn't have to worry about extra fuel costs or lavish training procedures or constantly upgraded equipment. The CAB restricted competition, and set prices high enough to allow the cost of safety to be passed on to the public. A lot of other costs were passed on as well—like $89,000 salaries for pilots who only worked 11 days a month. But, Thayer might answer, pilots who fly 11 days a month tend to be well rested.

Thayer applies his argument across-the-board to every industry where cutting corners might endanger the public—that is to say, virtually every industry. But does ensuring safety really require Mussolini-style state cartelization, or can "social regulation" be beefed up to do the job by itself? Susan and Martin Tolchin's new book, *Dismantling America** is in large part an effort, not entirely successful, to answer this question.

The Tolchins chronicle the demise under the Reagan administration of precisely those "social" regulations on which the mainstream consensus relies. If the problem were only Reagan, of course, the solution would be simple: boot him out of office and renew the government's commitment to protect the public against business.

At times the Tolchins seem to agree with this simple prescription. Unfortunately, their book isn't about to convince large numbers of voters to boot Reagan anywhere. This is a Washington job, filled with dry excerpts of congressional testimony and legal briefs, almost completely bereft of the sort of on-the-spot reporting that would engage the reader and convince him that the president really has mortgaged the health and safety of millions. Much of *Dismantling America* is a flat recitation of cuts in the budgets of regulators like the Environmental Protection Agency and Occupational Health and Safety Administration, of regulations that were canceled at the behest of industry lobbyists. Missing are examples of actual people who have been hurt or endangered as a result of these Reagan administration actions.

How many of the complaints about Anne Gorsuch's personnel cuts simply reflected bureaucratic self-interest? (I remember one friend of mine at the EPA, employed for a handsome salary in the Carter era to study the philosophical ramifications of cost-benefit analysis, who used to call me up on his free federal phone and talk for hours about how overworked he was under Gorsuch.) Did anybody get sick when the USDA chose to "relax cooking requirements for tuberculosis-infected hogs?" Who was injured when OSHA inspections declined by 15 percent? What actually happens in a plant when the OSHA inspector comes around, anyway? Does he really discover the important safety lapses or do workers, as well as managers, attempt to conceal the truth from him?

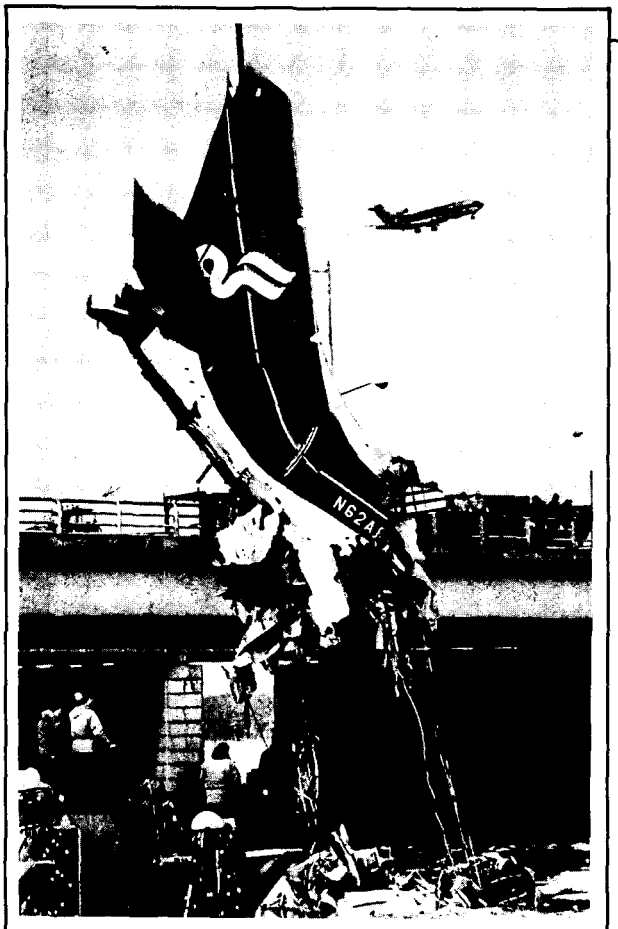
Answering these questions requires some legwork, and the Tolchins haven't done it. Instead, they content themselves with labeling canceled regulations as "strong" or "watered down," and with ritual invocations of Love Canal and Three Mile Island. Imagine a *New York Times* editorial expanded to 277 pages and you have a rough idea of the rhetoric-to-reportage ratio in this book. The low point comes when the Tolchins mention a regulation, characterized by the Reagan administration as "silly," that requires fishermen to resuscitate sea turtles caught in their nets before throwing the turtles back in the water. "But what about the semicomatose sea turtles?. . . " the Tolchins respond instinctively.

Underneath all the rhetoric, though, the Tolchins recognize that the problem is not just Reagan. Like others, they worry about the

---

**Dismantling America: The Rush to Deregulate*, Martin and Susan J. Tolchin, *Houghton Mifflin, $16.95.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Air Florida's Flight 90

Photo by UPI

"adversarial" nature of the regulatory system that Reagan confronted. And they struggle gamely with the question of whether the business-government cooperation that everyone would like is possible outside of a CAB-style cartel. Clearly, they have their doubts.

They point out, for example, that when it comes to enforcing safety and consumer precautions, economy-wide social regulators like the Federal Trade Commission and OSHA are at a big political disadvantage compared with the old-style economic regulators like the CAB. The old CAB had goodies to give out along with punishment for breaking its rules. It granted lucrative routes, stopped price wars, engineered mergers of weak companies. Even when the CAB antagonized the airline industry, it had antagonized only a single industry. Agencies like the FTC and OSHA, however, have no goodies to provide; they can only impose costs. And they can impose costs on every industry, which makes the entire business community their potential adversary in Congress (as the activist FTC, under Michael Pertschuk, quickly discovered). As long as Congress is responsive to lobbyists, the Tolchins imply, agencies like the FTC will always lose out.

On the other hand, the Tolchins note optimistically that sometimes the businessmen have an interest in supporting federal regulations—either to build the public's confidence in their product (Detroit wants people to think autos are safe) or to avoid the crazy-quilt regulation by 50 states that is the logical result of Reaganite federalism. The great virtue of *Dismantling America* is that it reminds us there is a practical, even noble, ideal of regulation—the idea of the level playing field, where the government sets the rules, and enforces them, and no businessman wants to see his competitor get away with cheating. As long as the regulations are the same for everyone, everyone can pass the costs on to the consumer. The industry won't necessarily like it (its products will be more expensive) but it will be able to live with it.

This regulatory ideal is sufficiently compelling that one wonders why it hasn't worked. The Tolchins at least hint at an explanation different from Thayer's: the system doesn't work, not because it is "adversarial," but because it is so legalistic, which is something a bit different.

The trouble starts, the Tolchins point out, when Congress decides to create an agency to make rules it doesn't want to make itself. This is the original sin of regulation, because—under the jerry-built system established during the New Deal—a rule that OSHA, say, comes up with will be second-guessed by the courts. In fact, virtually any rule that matters will be the subject of a lawsuit, from one side or the other, claiming that the agency "abused its discretion." ("We have to litigate to maintain our credibility," one environmental lawyer told the Tolchins.) This probability of litigation feeds back into the system, with "public interest" lawyers and business lawyers all girding for the inevitable suit at the interminable public hearings that an agency must hold to justify itself in court. The result is 17,000-page transcripts and a system that takes 12 years to fail to decide whether to put airbags in cars.

The Tolchins can't quite bring themselves to condemn this system for the disaster that it is. They have invested too much in attacking the Reagan administration for undermining the wonderful opportunities it offers public-interest types.

But they do seem to recognize that a better system would start with Congress taking a more

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

active, politically accountable role by passing specific regulations itself, instead of passing the buck to the agencies. There may be regulations so complex that Congress must delegate the job to agency experts. But there are also plenty of situations where Congress, instead of, say, telling the Department of Transportation to "make the roads as safe as is feasible" can pass a law (as it has) saying, "the speed limit is 55 miles per hour."

If Congress is going to stop passing the buck, it will have to be forced to do so, preferably by an aroused citizenry. The payoff will be the virtual elimination of lawsuits in the formulation of health and safety rules. Congress would debate a rule, Ralph Nader would lobby for it, businessmen might (or might not) lobby against it, and it would either pass or not pass. Period. No lawsuits. No one can sue Congress (at least yet) by claiming that when it passes a *law* it has "abused its discretion."

But what about enforcing the rules once they're made? Here, at the level of the individual firm that wants to cut corners, regulation is irreducibly adversarial. Everyone can support laws against driving through red lights, but after that it's you against the cops. Our system is legalistic in this situation also—if you object to a traffic ticket, or an EPA fine, you can go to court.

It is here that the Reagan administration's solicitude for business seems most profoundly destructive. As the Tolchins argue, businessmen can be expected to support government regulation only if each one knows that the rules will be enforced firmly, that he's not going to be the sucker who spends money on extra gas for a "stabilized" landing while his competitor gets away with cheating. Bacardi spent $10 million to clean up the water around its rum factories, only to find that the Reagan administration was granting its competitors "regulatory relief." What are the chances that Bacardi will willingly spend another $10 million in the near future?

Industry-government "cooperation" in writing the rules of the game, then, depends on a very different sort of "cooperation" when those rules are enforced. Not the cooperation of a government bent on pleasing individual firms. Not even the "equal partnership" suggested by the Tolchins. I have in mind more the cooperation that small Caribbean islands give to large invading armies—the cooperation that businessmen might be expected to give to regulators who had unquestioned power to punish those who cheated on the rules.

One reason the traffic laws are widely obeyed, after all, is precisely that drivers *don't* have time to litigate every ticket. So we say "yes, officer" and pay the fine. Sometimes the cops are arbitrary. We accept this because we know that, in a democracy, if the police start handing out too many stupid tickets, there is a way to stop them. We might apply the same model to the enforcement of the safety rules affecting industry—sacrificing an individual company's ability to fight an EPA order, for example, because we know that if EPA repeatedly gets out of line it won't be difficult to rein it in.

In the end, enforcing rules to protect the environment, or the lives of air travelers, doesn't seem much more inherently difficult than enforcing the traffic laws. The problems come when the government's enforcement power is weak enough to lead individual businesses to think they can get away with cheating—and they'd better do it before their competitors do.

Which is why, as you are sitting in your Republic Airlines jet awaiting clearance for takeoff, it will probably not cheer you up to learn that the number of FAA inspectors has not been increased to cope with the temptations of deregulation—it has fallen from 640 in 1980 to 534 today. But don't worry. The FAA is instead putting more emphasis on the "check-airman" program.

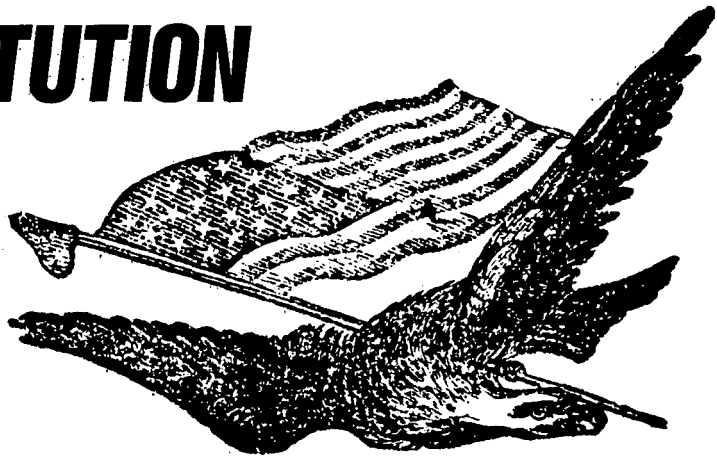
When the public elected Ronald Reagan to eliminate "waste, fraud, and abuse" in the federal government, it is doubtful they had FAA inspectors in mind. There is waste in government, of course. There are, for example, 44,768 employees of the FAA who are *not* inspectors. A president who really wanted to make air deregulation a success would have gone after some of them, and used the savings to pay for more people to do the actual work needed to keep the skies safe.

The Tolchins don't bother to distinguish between useful and useless regulators any more than Reagan does. But they are surely right to point out that the two halves of Reagan's anti-government crusade—economic deregulation and social deregulation—are at war with each other. To make the competitive game tolerable to both businessmen and bystanders, we need a government with the unquestioned power to decide the basic ground rules swiftly and democratically, and to enforce them firmly. That is a government we didn't have, even before Reagan came along. Before we join Frederick Thayer in waxing nostalgic about the glory days of CAB-type cartels, let's give that government a try. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE VICE-PRESIDENCY

THE CONSTITUTION



Vice-Presidential Power
Advice and Influence in the White House

Paul C. Light

Revealing examinations of the vice-presidential careers of Nelson Rockefeller and Walter Mondale highlight this study of a fundamental shift in the White House balance of power: the emergence of the Vice-President as a powerful force in presidential policy formulation. Light explores the role of the modern Vice-President as an adviser, his influence on national policy, and the impact enhanced vice-presidential power can have on a given administration and on the nation's selection of its leaders.

The vice-presidential performance of George Bush is examined in the concluding chapter of a book that may banish forever the stereotype of the superfluous Vice-President.

$19.95

On What the Constitution Means

Sotirios A. Barber

"Barber has a way—and it is very rare—of treating the Constitution as a cluster of problems in moral philosophy. He reawakens wonder at the mere fact that a country has lived by a charter for two hundred years and that the charter, in its foundations as well as in its aspirations, reaches to the deepest moral and ethical questions. And Barber accomplishes this feat of analysis while respecting the strictest standards of legal and historical learning."—*George Kateb, Amherst College*

Arguing that "no one can read the Constitution without presupposing a theory of what we stand for as a people," Sotirios A. Barber blends textual, intentionalist, consensual, and other approaches to propose a theory of constitutional aspirations and to assess how well the framers succeeded in expressing their view of a constitutional order.

$17.50

Available at your bookstore or from

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY PRESS

BALTIMORE MARYLAND 21218

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHO'S WHO in the Administration

As you may recall, in our September issue we revealed that Reagan's reelection campaign would be co-chaired by Senator **Paul Laxalt** and **Drew Lewis**, the former secretary of transportation. We also disclosed that **Jim Lake**, who departed the Reagan circle in February 1980 along with then-campaign manager **John Sears**, would serve as the campaign's press secretary. Formal announcements have since confirmed our disclosures about Laxalt and Lake. Still no official word on Lewis, though our best information says he'll join the campaign next spring.

Speaking of Lake, the high regard he engenders in the Reagan camp is suggested by recent rumors that he will be considered for the job of White House press secretary should **Larry Speakes**, who is viewed as loyal but somewhat limited, decide to leave. Perhaps a more inspired choice, given Reagan's poor regard among women, would be **Sheila Tate**, now press secretary to **Nancy Reagan**. Tate has shown skill and good humor in her efforts to persuade the country that the first lady is not Marie Antoinette. . . .

If Speakes does leave, don't ascribe it to a blunder on his part in misleading reporters about the invasion of Grenada. That would be a bum rap. Senior White House officials apparently didn't give Speakes any notice. In lodging an internal complaint about his treatment, the press secretary erred only by putting it in writing. Speakes was sandbagged by his assistant, **Les Janka**, who leaked his memo to the press, hurting Speakes and leaving Janka with a choice of being fired or resigning immediately.

As Speakes has painfully learned, Janka is a classic example of the most dangerous leaker in Washington—the new, junior employee whose loyalty to his boss can still be overridden by his need to demonstrate his status as an insider to friends and acquaintances. . . .

Internal efforts to find a graceful exit for **Jim Rosebush**, Nancy's chief of staff, so far have proved clumsy failures. The UNESCO job in Paris was one the present occupant apparently wanted to keep, and the post of consul-general in Bermuda didn't sway Rosebush—it doesn't have ambassadorial rank. . . .

Subtler hints are being given presidential speechwriter **Tony Dolan**. Once the heir apparent to chief speechwriter **Ken Khachigian**, he's now been passed over twice, first for **Aram Bakshian Jr.** and now for **Bently Elliott**. . . .

If you're still following Debategate, a recent item in the *Washington Times* suggests three more suspects: **Kathleen Reid**, **Rosemary Rogers**, and **Georgia O'Connor**. All three worked for **Stu Eizenstat**, Carter's domestic policy adviser and chief keeper of the debate books. Reid is now a special assistant to the Reagan's domestic policy staff and Rogers and O'Connor work as assistants to **Martin Feldstein**, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers.

The three aren't the only ones who've demonstrated such ideological dexterity. **Patricia Byrne**, once on **Jody Powell**'s staff, now works for **John Rogers**, director of the White House Office of Administration. **Vanna Shields** was personal secretary to **Sarah Weddington**, Carter's chief strategist on the Equal Rights Amendment. She can now be found toiling for **David Stockman**. . . .

In

WHITE HOUSE

National Security Adviser—**Robert McFarlane** has been deputy assistant and personal representative to the Middle East.

Director, Presidential Speechwriting Office—**Bently Elliot** has been acting director.

Deputy Press Secretary, Foreign Affairs—**Robert B. Sims** is also senior National Security Council director for public affairs.

DEFENSE

Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs—**William Mayer** has been administrator of alcohol, drug abuse, and mental health at the Department of Health and Human Services.

ENERGY

Assistant Secretary for International Affairs—**Helmut A. Merklein** has been teaching at Texas A&M University.

LABOR

Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management—**Thomas C. Komarek** has been administrator of financial and management systems at the Employment Training Administration.

AGENCIES AND COMMISSIONS

Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration—**John H. Riley** has been an organizer for the Senate Rail Caucus.

STATE

Special Representative to the Middle East—**Donald Rumsfeld** is a former defense secretary and U.S. representative to NATO.

Out

WHITE HOUSE

Deputy Press Secretary, Foreign Affairs—**Leslie A. Janka** has been fired.

COMMERCE

Assistant Secretary for Trade Administration—**Lawrence J. Brady** has resigned.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Desert One: The Wrong Man and the Wrong Plan

by Phillip Keisling

One consequence of the American invasion of Grenada already is clear: its relative ease has momentarily dispelled the lingering aura of "Can't Do" that has haunted the U.S. military for many years. Never mind that we lost eight of our new UH-60 helicopters to small-arms fire, that most of our casualties resulted from accidents or "friendly fire" from our own troops, or that our intelligence failed on such basic matters as estimating the number of Cuban troops on the island. We "won" one for a change.

That so many find reassurance in winning this obvious mismatch is due, in large measure, to our fears about America's prowess, which had their origin in the Korean stalemate, were reinforced in Vietnam, and were culminated in the early morning hours of April 25, 1980, at a place called Desert One. There, a team of Army commandos was forced to abort its mission to rescue the 53 Iranian hostages. Before beating a hasty retreat, the raiders left eight men dead and enough sensitive documents lying around in abandoned aircraft to blow the cover of the few CIA operatives then in Iran.

Colonel Charles (Chargin' Charlie) Beckwith was commanding officer of "Delta Force," the name of the unit picked to rescue the hostages and the title of his book on the failed raid.* His account of the raid indicts the familiar culprits we've long since come to associate with Carter's presidency: bureaucratic ineptitude, failure of nerve, plain bad luck. Not surprisingly, Beckwith defends his decision to abort the mission at Desert I after three of eight helicopters could not proceed—two because of mechanical failures and one because its pilot turned back in a fierce sandstorm less than 100 miles from his destination.

I suspect that few readers will seriously quarrel with Beckwith's decision. The failure of the helicopters seems like a plausible explanation. Though the tough-guy pose he assumes in the book is annoying, Beckwith is clearly a man of courage, as demonstrated by his years as a Green Beret in Vietnam, which he recounts here. Finally, Beckwith's case will be aided by his considerable personal charm; in interviews, his soft Georgia accent and the somewhat corny figures of speech—"You're singing a beautiful song now" is his way of saying "I agree"—are disarming.

But Beckwith has made his case many times before; what distinguishes *Delta Force* is its insights into how the United States military makes decisions. More specifically, the book reveals—inadvertently—two important reasons the rescue mission's failure was inevitable rather than accidental. These reasons have been largely overlooked or merely hinted at in almost all accounts of the raid, from news stories to the military's official post mortem, known as the Holloway report. Beckwith himself would be loath to acknowledge either reason. But they're important to recognize, for behind them lie some critical weaknesses that, our "victory" in Grenada notwithstanding, persist to this day.

Beckwith's failure to acknowledge the first reason is perfectly understandable. For all his courage as a soldier—his nickname was well-earned—Beckwith's account of how the mission was planned and his own behavior at Desert One suggest something truly disturbing: that when the going got tough, the man to whom the Pentagon entrusted this crucial mission lost his cool.

The second reason far overshadows the first. By the time Delta Force arrived at Desert I, the

Phillip Keisling is an editor of The Washington Monthly.

**Delta Force*, Colonel Charlie A. Beckwith, *Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $14.95.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mission was no longer Beckwith's to botch. Its failure had almost been assured by the military's process of planning the raid, analyzing it for defects, and choosing the man to lead it. The military systematically ignored or downplayed intelligence that suggested the difficulty—if not the impossibility—of the task. The plan for the raid, approved and monitored by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, violated a fundamental tenet of military strategy, which holds that the possibility of failure increases exponentially with a plan's complexity and size. Perhaps most important, an undue obsession with secrecy prevented the plan's proper evaluation and allowed those ultimately responsible for the mission—the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the president—to convince themselves the raid stood a reasonable chance of succeeding.

Delta Dawn

Both these reasons are worth closer examination, for the institutional defects they illustrate still exist. But first it's necessary to recall how the raid—particularly after Desert One—was supposed to work.

The mission's complexity cannot be overestimated. All four services were involved in the planning and execution of the raid: Marine helicopter pilots would fly from Navy ships to rendezvous with Army commandos who'd arrived on Air Force cargo planes. Delta Force would travel from Egypt to Desert One on the Air Force's C-130s, while the helicopters would fly a different route from a carrier in the Sea of Oman. After refueling and taking on the commandos, the helicopters would fly to a second hideout—Desert Two—50 miles outside Teheran. After hiding all day, the 132-man force (93 members of Delta and 39 support personnel) would load in the dark onto six trucks secured for them by CIA operatives who'd recently infiltrated the country. The commandos would then be driven in the trucks into downtown Teheran, past several roadblocks. The raid would begin at midnight. Slipping silently over the walls of the American embassy, the members of Delta Force would fan out and search the buildings for hostages, killing any Iranian who resisted.

Up to this point, the raid is supposedly still a secret. That would change—a hole would be blown through the embassy wall, shattering windows in a three-block area. In the ensuing confusion, the hostages would be rounded up and loaded on the helicopters, which by now had arrived on the scene. If the helicopters could not land on the embassy grounds—indeed, the student militants had placed poles in the open areas to prevent this—the hostages would be taken to the soccer stadium across the street. From there, the hostages would be flown to an abandoned airfield 35 miles south of Teheran, at Manzariyeh, by now supposedly overtaken by a separate team of Army Rangers. The hostages would be flown home by C-141 transport planes that were to arrive from Egypt.

Of course, the whole thing unraveled at Desert One. The helicopters were 90 minutes late, in large part because the pilots thought they had to fly at treetop to escape detection by radar. (The C-130 pilots flew much higher, having been informed that Iranian radar wasn't working that night.) The delay ensured that Delta probably couldn't reach Desert Two before sunrise, thereby vastly increasing the chance of detection.

Beckwith technically wasn't the officer in charge of the Desert One phase of the operation, but it's clear he was calling the shots. And as he awaited the helicopters' arrival, he made a decision that, in retrospect, seems more dubious than his later one to abort the raid. Despite the increased risks of detection, Beckwith decided to change the plan and proceed with the mission. "I made up my mind! No matter when the choppers arrived—and no matter when we arrived at the hidesite—we would go ahead," he writes.

That decision became moot with the failure of one of the six helicopters that managed to get to Desert One. When the craft developed hydraulic problems, General James Vaught, the off-site commander of the mission, radioed to ask Beckwith's opinion about proceeding with five helicopters. It was a logical question, and one that national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, from the safety of the White House Situation Room, was hoping Beckwith would answer affirmatively. Beckwith's reaction displays something less than dispassionate deliberation: "I lost respect right then for General Vaught. Damn, I thought, how in the hell can the boss ask me that! He should know it will be a disaster if we go forward with five. . . . This is ludicrous. It doesn't make sense. Stay with the plan." This resolve to stay with the plan came just minutes after Beckwith had decided to alter the plan. And if anything, flying during daylight hours would have jeopardized the mission's success more than the decision to proceed with only five helicopters, particularly since only three were necessary to carry the commandos and the 53 hostages out of Teheran.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

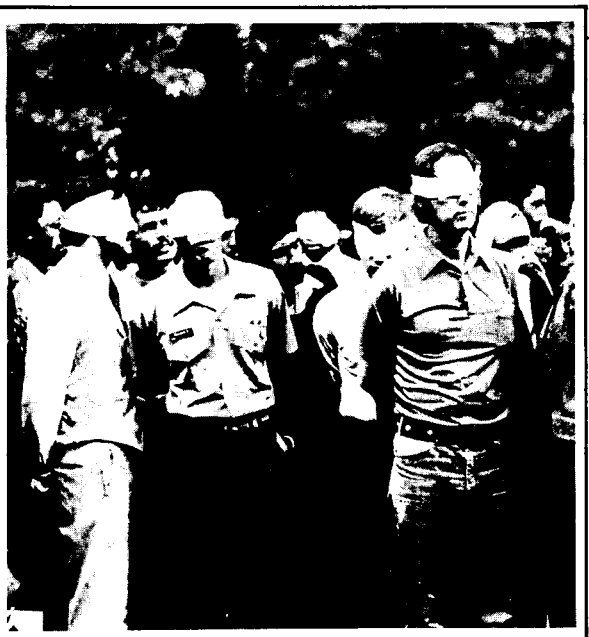


Photo by UPI

In all fairness, Beckwith had made these two decisions in an atmosphere of eerie chaos that had reigned almost from the first moment the commandos arrived at Desert One. A bus carrying 40 Iranian tourists appeared on a supposedly seldom-traveled road; a gasoline tanker truck appeared soon after. The passengers were detained; after being fired upon, the gasoline tanker exploded and burned for several hours. With the roar of 12 helicopter rotors and 16 C-130 engines, communication was possible only if you "put your face up to the other person's and yelled or used hand and Army signals." The situation became even more chaotic when, during refueling, one of the helicopters crashed into a C-130 and eight men died in the ensuing explosion.

Still, the confusion hardly excused the breakdown of leadership and the panicked retreat from Desert One that Beckwith's account graphically suggests. Three of the helicopters near the burning planes contained classified information that would later fall into Iranian hands, endangering the lives of the undercover agents helping in Teheran. Delta had the firepower to destroy all the helicopters, but didn't. When those responsible for the classified information tried to retrieve it, they were instead hustled onto the C-130. Someone on the site (Beckwith can't remember who), suggested that an airstrike be called in, but Carter vetoed the idea. By that time, however, everyone had left. No enemy was pressing in on Delta, but Beckwith was so preoccupied with leaving that these considerations were momentarily forgotten. "I wanted to get everyone out of the desert as soon as possible," he says.

The stress showed most when the dispirited commandos returned to Egypt and Beckwith delivered an angry denunciation of the helicopter pilots, some of whom had expressed doubts about continuing the mission. "I gotta tell you, I was emotional," writes Beckwith. "At this time, I may have also called the helo pilots cowards. Some say I did. I really didn't care. I carried a great deal of stress from the time we left Egypt until we returned. That's what I got paid to do. I'm not a perfect person."

Coop or the Duke?

Of course, few people could have kept calm amidst such tragedy and bitter disappointment. And though a similar loss of calm at a crucial moment in Teheran might have ruined the whole mission, at Desert One Beckwith's lapses had one saving grace: they were not the cause of the mission's failure. William Safire of *The New York Times* recently dubbed as "Beckwithism" the notion of always sticking to the plan, "not taking a risk to win a victory." But in almost calling Beckwith a coward, Safire is grossly unfair; what he and many others have failed to recognize is that the Iranian rescue mission had been lost long before Delta Force set foot in Iran. It was Beckwith's superiors who had ultimate responsibility for the raid, and it was their mistakes that almost guaranteed that if the raid hadn't failed at Desert One, it would have failed somewhere else.

One of the mistakes, of course, was entrusting so much responsibility to Beckwith himself. But his rank and position made him seem like a logical choice; Delta Force, after all, was the result of a long and acrimonious battle he'd waged within the Army bureaucracy. Beckwith's charm and reputation for toughness also impressed many people outside of uniform. One of them was Hamilton Jordan, who in his book *Crisis* extols Beckwith's virtues at great length. At one point he approvingly relates a conversation between two friends about whether John Wayne would be right to play Charlie Beckwith in a movie of his life. "No, John Wayne's not tough enough," one of the friends replied.

But looking back, what the mission needed was not a John Wayne so much as a Gary Cooper—someone who would be cool under fire, not overanxious to charge or quick to anger. In this

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

respect Beckwith provides a vivid contrast to another famous special forces soldier, Major Richard Meadows, who was described by David Martin in a July 1982 cover story in *Newsweek*, by far the best account to date of the internal workings of the raid. Whereas Beckwith made his reputation during his bold mission to relieve the besieged defenders of Plei Mei in 1965, Meadows made his as the leader of the 1970 raid on Son Tay prison camp in North Vietnam to rescue American POWs. The mission was well-executed; unfortunately, intelligence failed to disclose that the POWs had been evacuated shortly before.

Of course, it's impossible to say whether the Iran raid would have worked under the leadership of someone like Meadows. But it likely would have been planned differently, particularly when it came to the size of the force. Both Meadows and Beckwith had been asked shortly after the hostages were taken to recommend a rescue plan. Meadows had favored using a relatively small assault force of about 40. Beckwith greeted the idea with scorn. "I had laughed when it was suggested that 40 of them be used. A hell of a lot more than that would be needed! . . . There was simply too much to do. Delta couldn't assault the large compound, seize and clear 14 buildings, secure and hold adjoining Roosevelt Avenue, organize, protect, and move 53 hostages—it just couldn't be done with fewer than 70 operators."

Perhaps 70 were needed. But every additional man complicates the logistics of the mission and increases the danger of detection. And the number didn't stay at 70. In December 1979, the force was increased to include 92 men—which happened to be the entire Delta contingent at Camp Smokey, North Carolina. In describing the events of January, Beckwith refers to a "new figure of nearly 120 men," including separate drivers for the trucks and six Farsi translators. By the time Delta left Egypt for Iran in April, on board the C-130s were 132 men, including two former Iranian generals.

One can understand the process. The natural desire to protect the lives of one's men encourages the commander to err on the side of excess. Months of waiting—Delta was put on alert seven times before it finally left for Iran—gives plenty of time to conjure up new contingencies. Finally, there's the tendency to want to reduce the consequences of one's own mistakes. As the Holloway report gently observed in criticizing the growth in the raiding party, "A commander is always tempted to improve his posture up to the point where the battle is joined."

Still, the process not only should have been resisted, as the Holloway report suggested, but it should have communicated something disturbing to Beckwith's superiors. The original estimate of 70 commandos—which General Vaught initially thought was already too high—assumed that all 14 embassy buildings needed to be searched for hostages. Yet by early 1980 intelligence analysts had narrowed the number down to four. Beckwith, in arguing for more men anyway, responded that the main embassy building, the chancellory, was better fortified than originally thought.

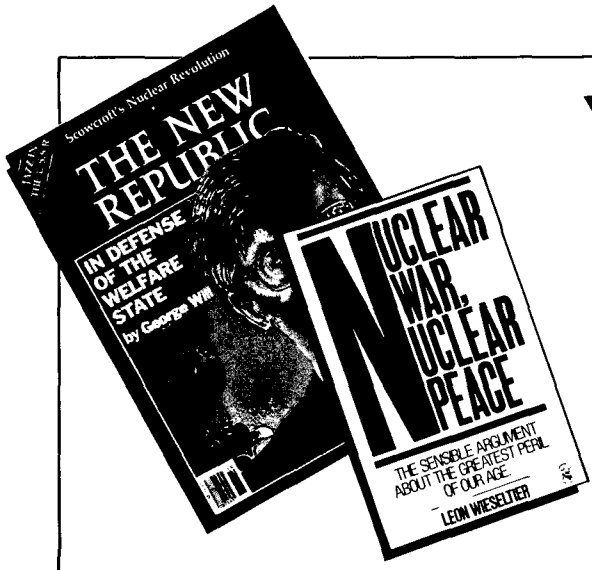
Delta didn't discover where the hostages were until after it had arrived in Egypt in preparation for the raid. The information resulted from the kind of serendipity that seems contrived even by Hollywood standards. Several days before the raid, the Iranian militants discharged a Pakistani national who'd been cooking for the hostages; on the plane home, he happened to sit next to a deep-cover CIA agent. (How lucky that neither was immersed in a flight magazine!) All the hostages were being held in the chancellory, and the cook described how they were guarded.

Beckwith's response to this information is revealing, for it illustrates the inflexibility of large operations to respond to sudden changes. Instead of paring down the number of commandos, he simply re-divided their tasks. And at Desert One, he summarily dismissed taking fewer men in five helicopters, even though the task at the embassy was now much easier than he had thought when he began. "Everyone was doing two jobs as it is, some of them three, " he remarks. Offered without proof, the response also raises the question of why Beckwith was willing to proceed with a force he still thought was too small.

'America needs a win'

As those in the military know, plans have a way of taking on a momentum of their own. The plan exists; if problems arise, the plan should be refined and improved, but not abandoned. Those who have a personal stake in the success of a given plan are particularly susceptible to this process, and Beckwith was certainly among them. His fights inside the bureaucracy—particularly with General Jack Mackmull of the Special Forces Center at Fort Bragg and General Guy "Sandy" Meloy of the Army Rangers—are described at length in the book. They felt Delta Force was redundant, that the Green Berets and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Yours FREE

with your paid subscription to THE NEW REPUBLIC . . .

Nuclear War, Nuclear Peace . . . a landmark in the great nuclear debate that Leslie Gelb of The New York Times called "brilliant" and that James Fallows of the Atlantic described as an "eloquent, careful call to reason."

Earlier this year, THE NEW REPUBLIC devoted nearly an entire issue to a single article . . . Leon Wieseltier's landmark essay, "Nuclear War, Nuclear Peace."

The praise for Wieseltier's clear, common sense call to reason has been lavish and universal.

Henry Kissinger wrote us to say, "one of the most thoughtful essays I have read on a difficult subject."

Harvard's Daniel Bell said, "Leon Weiseltier has analyzed the central strategic issue of the day . . . with a clarity and lucidity unmatched by any other writing on the subject."

And Max Lerner of The Los Angeles Times described it as a "brilliant analysis."

Now this truly landmark essay has been updated, revised and expanded into book form. And it's yours FREE with your paid subscription to THE NEW REPUBLIC. . .

. . . the weekly magazine of politics and the arts that Time called "The liveliest and best weekly journal of opinion" in America.

Nuclear War, Nuclear Peace is FREE.
THE NEW REPUBLIC is only 56¢ an issue!

Return the coupon below today and you can get THE NEW REPUBLIC for only 56¢ an issue. That's 63% off the $1.50 cover price and 40% off the regular subscription rate of 94¢ an issue.

What's more, as soon as we receive payment for your subscription, we'll rush you your FREE copy of Nuclear War, Nuclear Peace.

Just look what you've been missing in THE NEW REPUBLIC lately . . .

The Andropov File . . . Hard Times for the Hard Right . . . Lebanon Eyewitness . . . Reagan's Deficit of Sense . . . The Politics of Women's Bodies . . . The Art of Being Rude . . . John Lennon vs. the F.B.I. . . . The Senate's Secret Slush Fund. PLUS, Mondale's Choice, Glenn's Potential, Cranston's Credentials . . . and Irving Howe on 'Oliver Twist', Dick Cavett on Sid Caesar and Stanley Kauffmann on Monty Python.

THE NEW REPUBLIC
FREE GIFT OFFER

☐ YES, send me THE NEW REPUBLIC at the introductory rate of only $27 a year (48 issues). That's only 56¢ an issue – 40% off the regular subscription rate, 63% off the $1.50 cover price. Send me my FREE copy of Nuclear War, Nuclear Peace as soon as you receive payment for my subscription.

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. No. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

☐ Payment enclosed, send me my FREE copy of Nuclear War, Nuclear Peace at once.

☐ Bill me later. Send me my FREE copy of Nuclear War, Nuclear Peace as soon as you receive my subscription payment.

Mail to: THE NEW REPUBLIC
P.O. Box 955
Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737

73B122

Money-Back Guarantee: If you are unhappy with The New Republic at any time, you may cancel for a full refund on all unmailed copies. Please allow 2-3 weeks for delivery of the first issue. All foreign orders must be prepaid. Additional postage: add $22 per year to foreign orders and $10 per year to Canadian orders, payable in U.S. currency.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rangers could handle counterterrorist operations; to press his case, Beckwith often went over the heads of his superiors directly to Army Chief of Staff E.C. Meyer. The rescue mission was his chance to establish Delta Force's rightful place in the Army's hierarchy.

But if Beckwith's tendency to ignore unsettling questions about the plan is somewhat understandable, the tendency of his superiors to do the same isn't. The rescue mission was the single largest military action undertaken by the U.S. military since the *Mayaguez* rescue mission in 1975 in which 15 Marines died. This was no time to substitute wishful thinking for hard, clear analysis; unfortunately, that's exactly what happened.

One reason for this was ignorance. Because special operations have always been a step-child inside the military—by definition, their adherents disdain conventional tactics and thinking—few officers who have championed them have risen to the top. Accordingly, few generals really understood the strengths and limitations of Delta Force. Beckwith made their job harder by showing off his program to maximum effect: one common technique was to put visiting dignitaries in a room that was full of dummies, turn out the lights, and then have a Delta Force team burst in and open fire with live ammunition.

How could Beckwith's superiors have known which tough questions to ask? They could have taken a lesson from President Franklin Roosevelt and asked Beckwith's enemies within the bureaucracy to critique the plan. FDR knew, for example, that two of his top officials—Harry Hopkins and Harold Ickes—despised each other. So whenever Ickes proposed something, Roosevelt would ask Hopkins about it, and vice versa, knowing that their mutual dislike would inspire each to spend a lot of time trying to identify weaknesses in the other's proposals. After filtering out the objections he thought were motivated by spite, Roosevelt could feel confident that most of the hard questions had been raised.

In this instance, no one would have been better able to critique the plan than Beckwith's adversaries in the commando community—Generals Mackmull and Meloy, for starters. Yet the two were not actively involved in the process. Beckwith now says that he would have had no objection to that, providing they were "objective" in their criticisms, which of course they wouldn't have been. That's the point; it was up to others to evaluate their criticisms. Meadows likewise played little role in the planning process; he eventually volunteered for undercover service in Iran and had to flee the country when the abandoned documents at Desert One blew his cover.

The hostage rescue mission was lost long before Delta Force set foot in Iran.

Beckwith's superiors instead tended to rely on the judgments of the very people with a stake in the mission. So it was that the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General David Jones, asked for a special meeting with Beckwith the week before the mission to discuss the upcoming raid. It's a scene Beckwith and others have played for all the high human drama it supposedly portrays: the savvy chief looking the rough-hewn commando straight in the eye as they sit in Beckwith's car on the side of the road and asking him for his candid appraisal.

The script, however, is as predictable as can be imagined. According to Beckwith's account, he replied, "Sir, we've got to do it. We're ready." Jordan's account adds a flourish that seems to reflect his boss's political preoccupations at the moment; according to his account (which he obviously got straight from Beckwith), Jones was also told, "Besides, sir, America needs a win. We need one real, real bad."

Looking back, this element of wishful thinking—notice it's not "We will win" but "We need a win"—extended up the chain of command all the way to the president and his inner circle. Cyrus Vance, the secretary of state, was alone in having grave doubts about the plan's success; he also was familiar with the military's penchant for self-denial, having served as secretary of the Army under President Kennedy. "Generals will rarely tell you they can't do something," Vance told Jordan before the raid.

As a result of this pervasive desire to have the plan work, information that suggested otherwise didn't make it all the way up through the chain of command. Subordinates, after all, are generally reluctant to pass on information that their bosses don't want to hear for fear of somehow

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

being held responsible. But more honorable motives than fear are involved; subordinates also want to protect their bosses from having to deal with every little detail that arises. Carter didn't find out until after the raid of the grumbling about the quality of the helicopter pilots; during one practice night landing, for example, the helicopters had landed nearly a mile from one another.

To counteract this tendency to suppress the unpleasant fact, ways must be found to leapfrog the existing chain of command. The general, or someone who has his complete trust, should talk to the lieutenants, the sergeants, even the privates who will actually be performing the mission. What are their concerns? The top brass can also avoid the typical chain of command completely—for example, by calling in a few retired officers familiar with special operations.

None of this seems to have happened; if anything, the planning for the rescue mission adhered even more closely to the chain of command than missions of much less consequence. The rationale for this—the importance of maintaining complete secrecy—was understandable, but in retrospect it's clear that the concern became an obsession that needlessly undermined any chance the raid may have had.

The Holloway report hardly excoriated the military for having botched the rescue operation, and it refused to examine the most important question—whether the plan stood a reasonable chance of working had Delta Force ever gotten beyond Desert One. But its criticisms of the planning process are about as strongly worded as such internal reviews usually dare to get: "Planners [of the raid] in effect reviewed and critiqued their own product for feasibility and soundness as they went along. . . The Joint Chiefs of Staff were acting in essence as their own action officers. . . This meant that the hostage rescue plan was never subjected to rigorous testing and evaluation by qualified independent observers and monitors short of the Joint Chiefs of Staff themselves."

Colonel Harry Summers, author of a recent study of military tactics during the Vietnam war entitled *On Strategy*, offers a more pointed assessment. "There's a very good case to be made, " he says, "that the mission's failure illustrates the terrible price one pays for secrecy. There wasn't the kind of rigorous questioning you needed to expose the flaws in the plan. "

So what were the flaws? Two of the major flaws—perhaps insurmountable ones—involved the absolute need for secrecy before Delta Force reached the embassy, and the time it took to locate, free, and evacuate the hostages.

Beckwith stresses throughout the book how crucial it was to get to the embassy without arousing Iranian suspicions. But think about what was involved. For over 24 hours the 132-man force and six helicopters would have to remain undetected. During that period, the commandos would have to move between three hiding places—Desert One, Desert Two, and the outer walls of the embassy. Any slip-up along the route—the Iranians' picking up any of the helicopters or planes on their radar, Delta's failing to pass unnoticed through one of the roadblocks into Teheran, a sheepherder's spotting the helicopters overhead and notifying his local *mullah*—would have destroyed that secrecy and put the militants on alert. This wasn't Grenada, where the loss of surprise and some embarrassing failures of intelligence increased U.S. casualties but hardly ruined the invasion.

The element of surprise was crucial, not just to get a jump on the student militants, but to get the 53 hostages out safely. The embassy, remember, was in the middle of Teheran, and the arriving helicopters—each the size of two Greyhound buses strapped side-by-side—could hardly be unnoticed. "I heard them before they came into sight," Beckwith writes about waiting for the choppers at Desert One, which gives you some idea of the racket they make.

The worst aspect of the helicopters was their vulnerability. Paul Hoven, a pilot who flew over 1,000 missions in Vietnam, describes an all-too-common experience when he tells how he once watched nine of ten choppers go down as a result of small-arms fire from AK-47s. "Virtually nothing on a helicopter is armored; you get hit in the rotor or the fuel tank and that's it," Hoven says. Add to that the difficulty of maneuvering in a city, at night, and Hoven considers the plan a "one-in-a-thousand operation."

To make matters worse, the Iranians had more than rifles. They had vast stores of U.S. weapons that had been given to the Shah, including such helicopter nemeses as the .50-caliber machine gun and the 76mm cannon. The rescue mission's planners also suspected the Iranians had the ZSU-23-4, a Russian-made cannon mounted on an armored chassis and equipped with tracking radar. "The weapon scared us a lot," Beckwith admits. "Delta would have no chance against it."

The response of the raid's planners to the threat of the ZSU-23-4 epitomizes the larger tendency to dismiss the toughest questions with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

blithe assumptions. First, the military assumed that their enemy would be inept and incompetent, unable to get their heavier weapons into place for at least 90 minutes due to the chaos in the Iranian army. The second response to the threat was to make the mission even more complicated than it already was. To protect against the ZSU-23-4 and other hostile fire, the task force decided to call in two AC-130 E/H gunships that would fly in a tight circle above the embassy, firing on anything down below that looked unfriendly. "Having them overhead made the Delta operators feel more comfortable," Beckwith writes. "Morale soared. No way Delta was going to be pinned down and not be able to get the hostages out. That particular alarm bell stopped ringing."

This is exactly when the alarm bells should have started ringing for Beckwith's superiors. Delta was going to protect itself by resorting to a sizable and conspicuous display of force. The likely result, Beckwith admits, was Iranian casualties of "several hundred people." American casualties, on the other hand, were assumed to be "maybe one or two hostages." Soldiers obviously aren't paid to worry about politics. But there should be little doubt that Iranian casualties of that magnitude would have hardly helped in justifying the raid to the world.

By the same token, the estimates of American casualties were unrealistically light. Even Beckwith admits that he figured on losing "one or two helicopters" over the soccer stadium alone in the effort to lift out the hostages. If one of the helicopters had crashed with the hostages on board, the whole point of the mission would have been destroyed. And had Delta Force been driven to fight it out in the streets of Teheran, it would have made the confusion at Desert One look tame by comparison.

But the biggest unknown in the mission lay in how much time it would take to free the hostages. Exactly what the mission planners really thought is unclear; for example, in the *Newsweek* story last year, Beckwith estimates that it would have taken three or four hours. In *Delta Force* he claims that it would have taken just 45 minutes. This is hardly a trifling discrepancy; every extra minute would have given the Iranians more time to respond to the intrusion, with small-arms fire, the ZSU-23-4, or perhaps even some of the F-5 fighters that the Khomeini government had inherited from the Shah. The longer it took to free the hostages, the greater the likelihood that Delta Force would have to fight its way out of downtown Teheran—and the greater the likelihood that some of the hostages would have been caught in the crossfire.

The easiest way to deal with these unpleasant scenarios was to dismiss them the same way American officials dismissed the notion that we could lose in Vietnam. Victory seems closer if you convince yourself that the enemy is unable, or unwilling, to fight. And this is Beckwith's response when he's asked to reconcile his different time estimates, or to seriously contemplate the possibility that Iranian resistance, inside the embassy or in Teheran's streets, would have turned the surprise mission into a sudden debacle. According to Beckwith, the raid would have worked because the Iranians would have panicked. "How do I know that? Based on their mentality. Their soldiers aren't being paid. There was regular chaos in the country. And I've always believed that when we blew the wall, all hell would have broken loose. I know what I would have done in that case—and that's get under the bed."

The trouble with the "they're-different-than-us" attitude isn't just that it might be wrong, but that it might be right in exactly the wrong way. Iran wasn't supposed to have a chance in its war with Iraq, but if anything Iran is winning. Its soldiers not only aren't hiding under the bed; many are undertaking, in the name of Khomeini and Allah, the kind of suicide missions reminiscent of the Japanese kamikaze pilots of World War II.

But assume, finally, that the raid had actually worked, that all the thousand details had meshed together into a smoothly running machine. And picture the scene: the helicopter landing on the West Lawn of the White House, with 53 hostages stepping out into the spring sunshine to shake hands with a beaming president, whose reelection hopes had just soared.

But now picture the scene half a world away. In Teheran, several hundred Iranian civilians would probably be dead, and many more wounded. A number of downtown blocks (including the entire embassy compound) would have been reduced to rubble. The several hundred Americans still living in Teheran, many of them journalists assigned to cover the hostage crisis, would be waking up to learn of the raid for the first time. After having let 53 hostages escape, wouldn't Khomeini's loyalists have simply rounded up 53 more Americans to replace them?

It's an unsettling question—and just one of many that Beckwith, not to mention his superiors, never honestly confronted. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POLITICAL BOOKNOTES

Eisenhower. Stephen Ambrose. *Simon & Schuster, $22.95.* This solid and thoughtful biography follows the general's life from birth through his election as president in 1952. For those of us who would like to leave NATO to the Europeans, Ambrose has an interesting quote from Eisenhower in 1951: "If, in ten years, all American troops based in Europe for national defense purposes have not been returned to the United States, then this whole project will have failed."

—*Charles Peters*

Fiasco. Jack Anderson with James Boyd. *Times Books, $17.50.* When Richard Nixon took office in 1969, oil was selling for $1 a barrel, a glut was in prospect, and the Arab oil producers were in disarray. When Nixon left office in 1974, oil was at $12 a barrel, shortages loomed, and the major oil companies had joined with a united OPEC to squeeze us for all they could.

This book tells us how our own government made it happen. The main culprit, the authors say, is Mr. Nixon himself, who at every turn tried to distance himself from trouble, less concerned with what happened than who got the credit or blame. Here is Nixon leaving us vulnerable to OPEC by failing to push for either more drilling or more conservation, either of which would ruffle feathers. Here is Nixon putting off Anwar Sadat's peace overtures until after the '72 election, for fear of offending Jewish voters. By that time, however, it was too late, and the Yom Kippur War, and OPEC's discovery of its strength, were at least in part the result.

The authors don't always resist the temptation to take whatever position will make Nixon look bad. Is the man really to be faulted, for example, for stopping offshore development after the huge Santa Barbara oil spill? They do, however, tell a rich and engaging tale. Joining Mr. Nixon in the culprits list, for example, is Ambassador to Iran Douglas MacArthur II, who seemed to identify more with the Shah than with the American public at a time when OPEC was first challenging the balance of power in the Middle East.

—*Jonathan Rowe*

The File. Penn Kimball. *Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich. $13.95.* Federal spooks tracked Kimball, a professor at Columbia University, for most of his adult life, and almost everything in his 269-page file is found in this autobiography. Unfortunately Kimball's life, seemingly unaffected by his security ratings, turns out to be a lot less interesting than what the files themselves reveal about the earnest ineptitude of the State Department officials and FBI agents who suspected him of being a bad security risk because he drank beer with communists and was "an apologist of Marshall Tito." Even more disturbing than the obvious violation of Kimball's privacy is that our intelligence branches spent so long collecting so little information of real import. It makes you wonder whether they'd know an honest-to-goodness communist if they saw one.

—*Ben Holmes*

Finest Hour. Martin Gilbert. *Houghton Mifflin, $40.* This sixth volume of the great man's authorized biography is far less readable than Churchill's own enthralling account of the same years but it's far more thorough and thus a valuable contribution. For those of you still wondering why Churchill habitually referred to Sir Stafford Cripps as Sir Stifford Crapps, the explanation is here. While ambassador to Moscow, Cripps, in the spring of 1941, was instructed to deliver immediately an urgent personal message from Churchill to Stalin that British intelligence had "sure information" the Germans were planning to invade Russia. Cripps, whose opinion of himself was a good deal higher than anyone else's, decided the message would have more impact as part of a long letter from him to Vyshinsky, the Soviet foreign minister. The letter took Cripps 16 days to compose, and upon delivery was probably filed by some Russian desk officer, for all the good it did.

—*C.P.*

"How Can You Defend Those People?" The Making of a Criminal Lawyer. James S. Kunen. *Random House, $15.95.* The author, a former public defender in Washington, D.C., spent most of his time manipulating the legal system for his indigent (and almost always guilty) clients by plea bargaining or moving for mistrial. (Only 8 percent of the public

"An extremely fascinating and sophisticated look at how the Japanese are able to educate large numbers of students to very high levels."

—William Honig, California Superintendent of Education

"A splendid, vividly written, and timely book."

—Susan Pharr, author of *Political Women in Japan*

JAPAN'S HIGH SCHOOLS

by Thomas P. Rohlen

$35.00 cloth, $10.95 paper

At bookstores

University of California Press

Berkeley 94720

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

defender's felony cases in Washington go to trial.) Kunen came to play the game so well that he even convinced a client who insisted on his sanity to plead insanity, and, in another case, to help a client "get away with murder."

This is a lively and entertaining account, distinguished by Kunen's keen eye for bureaucratic absurdity and a saving sense of humor. But it leaves the reader wondering whether it's too much to ask that a larger portion of the guilty get what they deserve.

—Anne E. Depue

The Oil Follies: 1970 to 1980. Robert Sherrill. *Doubleday, $19.95.* After he failed by one vote to derail the deregulation of natural gas, then-representative Toby Moffett confided his feelings to Sherrill. "I just couldn't believe it," Moffett recalled. "I walked across the driveway [of Congress] and started shaking. Finally, I just put my face against a tree and cried for about 20 minutes." A few days later, when Representative Tom Downey approached Moffett to apologize for his defection, Moffett put it to him straight: "The fact is, you are a weak son of a bitch. And you will have to live with that." It's a vivid moment in this informed but two-dimensional tract that rails against just about every bad thing an oil company—or a sympathetic politician—has done in the past decade. (Sherrill doesn't give Downey's side.)

Sherrill's preoccupation gives him blind spots. When old Republican boss Mark Hanna threatens to withhold campaign contributions if Ohio's attorney general keeps pressing antitrust action against Standard Oil, that's bad. When William Winpisinger, head of the Machinists Union, does the same to Democrats who vote to deregulate natural gas, St. Francis couldn't have been more pure. I like Wimpy too. But if buying votes with campaign funds is bad when your enemies do it, it at least deserves a frown when your friends do the same.

—Jonathan Rowe

On Reagan: The Man and His Presidency. Ronnie Dugger. *McGraw-Hill, $17.95.* An angry and sharply-worded book, this is a relentless indictment—with example tripping over example—of how the president's policies benefit the privileged few and screw the many.

The staccato rhythm can get a bit wearying, and there is not much here that careful Reagan-watchers don't already know—with one noticeable exception: Dugger has mined gold from the radio broadcasts that Reagan made between 1975 and 1979, a resource heretofore largely overlooked by journalists. As the president doggedly works to moderate his image—casting overboard the likes of Anne Burford and James Watt and trying to bury his record on issues like hunger and education beneath new commissions and rhetorical flourishes—it is good, albeit unsettling, to be reminded that the current occupant of the Oval Office once said, "We have received [the] progressive income tax direct from Karl Marx, who designed it."

—Ronald Brownstein

S.I.O.P.: The Secret U.S. Plan for Nuclear War. Peter Pringle and William Arkin. *W.W. Norton, $16.95.* Aside from annoying factual errors (such as the misspelling of Robert McNamara's name), this book on the U.S. contingency plans for waging nuclear war suffers a more serious flaw—inadequate research. The book dwells at length on such secondary matters as military communications and early warning networks, release and launch procedures for nuclear weapons, and the number of potential Soviet targets. However, it offers little new information on its promised topic—our current and past plans for nuclear war. The definitive book on the S.I.O.P. has yet to be written.

—William J. Lynn

"There is nothing superior in the declassified literature....

THE COMMAND AND CONTROL OF NUCLEAR FORCES
Paul Bracken

No one who wants to understand (this subject) better can afford to neglect this book.... (A) major contribution."
—McGeorge Bundy, front page, *The New York Times Book Review*

This chilling discussion of how the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. would manage their nuclear forces in a crisis is "brilliant and sophisticated....A powerful and constructive exercise in rationality which fully confirms the good sense of the taboo against the actual use of nuclear weapons."—Eugene Rostow

"Valuable to concerned citizens as well as to professionals."
—Adam Yarmolinsky $19.95

At all bookstores or from
Yale University Press
New Haven, Ct. 06520

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE WILSON QUARTERLY

The newsmagazine of the world of ideas.

Only a handful of magazines still nurture the tradition of intellectually distinguished journalism. But just one—*The Wilson Quarterly*—combines the unmatched resources of the Smithsonian Institution's Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, with the clear, lively writing that stimulates and challenges modern minds.

The result is a magazine written by scholars and experts, but edited with a perspective that appeals to a far broader audience. *WQ* delivers a steady stream of thought-provoking ideas, many of which will shape tomorrow's policies and proposals. It is the only communications bridge linking intelligent laymen with the specialists on the cutting edge of today's culture, exploring all kinds of knowledge, from the cosmic to the comic.

Issue after issue, *WQ's* 160-plus pages are packed with advance reports from the frontiers of science, government, finance, art, philosophy, education, and literature. In addition, the *Quarterly* reviews more than 500 important new books and articles each year, keeping you abreast of the best reading in the English language, and presenting it to you in succinct summary form.

Among the *Quarterly's* best-known contributers: John Updike, Fernand Braudel, Carlos Fuentes, Barbara Tuchman, Hans Kung, George Kennan, Michael Novak, Philippe Ariès, David Riesman, Edward O. Wilson, Thomas Sowell.

More than 112,000 alert subscribers find *The Wilson Quarterly* indispensable reading in today's fast-changing world. We're confident you will, too. Begin your subscription now to receive a full year (five issues) of *The Wilson Quarterly,* and discover a world of new ideas.

Please enter my subscription to *The Wilson Quarterly* for the duration indicated below and bill me. I understand that I may cancel after my first issue at no obligation. ☐ One year (five issues) $17 ☐ Two years (ten issues) $29 *(Add $6.00 per year for foreign subscriptions. Add $15 per year for foreign airmail subscriptions. Allow six to eight weeks for delivery of your first issue).*

name

address

city state zip

The Wilson Quarterly Subscriber Service P.O. Box 2957 Boulder, CO 80321 5ABE0

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of American o left behind in oil fields that were tapped thirty or forty years ago," says Gulf Area Engineer John Shamburger. "In those days, crude was only two or three dollars a barrel, so we would operate an oil well only as long as the oil could be pumped up easily and inexpensively. It made more sense to drill new wells than to squeeze every drop out of old ones."

so low that the oil won't come up without some extra help. The extra help is called tertiary recovery, and it's a whole technology in itself. Here at Heidelberg, Mississippi, we started experimenting with it in 1971.

"One way to build up underground pressure is to set fire to some of the oil deep in the earth. That's called fireflooding. It drives the rest of the oil toward the well, where it can be pumped to the surface. The improvement can be pretty dramatic; in one case, production increased from one hundred to 2300 barrels per day.

"In other parts of the coun-

chemicals to get the oil fl ing."

All over America, Gulf using one or an technologies to out of old wells. and it isn't easy certain source America energy

Gulf

Gulf people energy for tomorro

©Gu

"Gulf's underground heat treatment gets more oil from old oil well

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED